

Headmaster's Diary

The dawn of the computer age at Candlewick seems programmed to embarrass Smellcroft

There seems to have been one meeting after another this week, and every evening has been spent on them too.

Monday was the summer fete planning committee, Tuesday the school and industry liaison committee, and last night the aims and objectives parent-teacher working party. This meant I had to miss the monthly meeting of the Winemakers' Circle, and Rona has begun to complain she only ever sees me eating cornflakes. This morning Smithson of Boglethorpe Comprehensive - just down the road from us - rang me to say he would be leaving next term.

"Early retirement with enhancement, old boy - an offer I just couldn't refuse." I must say that for a brief moment I felt a little envious, particularly since everyone knows Smithson is off by 4.30 every afternoon to concentrate on his exhibition dahlias.

Then Vincent Pile, our new head of science - he takes over next term - came to spend a day getting to know the place. Although I wasn't happy about his appointment under pressure from Councillor Dimpickle, our chairman of governors, I must say it seems to have gone down well with the county. I've been trying for months to get some money to spend on our computer education project. Then this man Pile said in his interview that his vision of the eighties was computers in every classroom, and a cheque from the office arrived within days. So I've been encouraging everyone to make the most of the new equipment, and the sixth formers have been most enthusiastic. We were also very fortunate to get a new set of stereo equipment for the music block to replace the stuff that was stolen. I knew the county normally took months over this sort of thing, but Arnold Bogwin, my resourceful deputy, told me to leave it to him. I was amazed when it turned up next week. Arnold told me it was quite easy. "It's no good saying you need it for the music block," he said. "That has zero priority."

"Instead, I phoned up Jonathan Hack, the chief adviser, and told him we needed it for school self-evaluation and classroom interaction studies. You know - recording kids coughing and teachers talking." According to Arnold, you can get anything if it is to do with evaluation. He has now been promised new stage lighting equipment for the drama theatre, so that we can do "triangulated assessments of teacher-pupil encounter situations". The rule is simple:

says Arnold. "Never say you want it for teaching. That will kill it stone dead". There are times when I find Arnold's devious schemes quite extraordinary.

Then we both had a session with Vincent Pile, whom Arnold has dubbed "the Atomic One". He is an earnest man with thinning hair brushed forward, thick spectacles and big yellow teeth. As soon as I mentioned computers, he was off. "Well, Dr Smellcroft," he said, "I'm delighted to know of your support for the mighty micro, since it will transform schools as we know them. For a start, you need an administration computer to form a pupil database and so service your management capability. Then system-based studies in the classroom - 'hands-on' experience for all, with interactive programs and individualized learning as teachers develop exciting new professional roles."

While Vincent paused for breath, Arnold said: "It's nice to know the educational millennium is on its way at last. I've been fooled once or twice in the last 10 years: resource centres, language laboratories, teaching machines. But now I have your word for it, Mr Pile, I know we're going to be all right. It's wonderful to meet someone with such unshakeable faith in technology first and humanity second."

"That's right," said Pile, pressing on without pause. "I've brought a few little items along today, as a matter of fact. I'm sure your history and geography people will love these new programs which Professor Dugden at the university has just developed." So we all went across to the maths block and I asked Cecil Stonejaw, the head of history, to come and look at this exciting new development.

It's strange that there always seem to be such long delays while these computer people fiddle around pressing buttons and making the machine work. But eventually we all watched what Vincent called a "simulation". The development of the "Candlewick horticultural industry". I found it all tremendously impressive, but Cecil was somewhat critical. "It's mediocre technology and lousy history," he said, as Vincent turned and grinned proudly at us all. "In fact, it misrepresents historical and political factors in favour of crude geographical simplifications which are quantified in a very dubious way."

At this Arnold said: "Come to think of it, I tried computer time-tableing once, and had to spend a month doing the hard bit - the last 10 per cent which the computer

wasn't clever enough to work out". I hastily remarked that it was time for lunch - I could see Cecil had thrown down the gauntlet, and in any case it would be a pity to allow doubt and despondency to creep in just when the computer revolution is about to improve everything so much.

After school Vincent Pile said he would like to stay on for the special staff meeting on multi-cultural education, which was to be introduced by Cecil Stonejaw.

Cecil stressed the need to recognize the diverse cultures in our society and the need to take account of them in our curriculum planning. Then Vincent said, "I take it, Mr Stonejaw, you are arguing for the rights of underprivileged minorities? Then may I ask what you propose to do about the research which shows that people whose names begin with letters from A to K do better than those beginning with L to Z?"

"People whose names begin with P, like myself, experience grossly unfair delays in queues, interviews and administration. Moreover, I am of below average height, and this gives me serious feelings of inadequacy when addressing those of normal stature. How do you suppose short pupils are to be compensated for this deprivation?"

Before Cecil could develop a counter-argument, he was interrupted by Fiona Bromley-Baskett, our head of home economics: "Having just come back from a deputy headship interview," she said, "I think Mr Pile is quite right. I was told by the county advisers that although I had good ideas, I was too young for the job. I must have quite unfair discrimination against me for a state of affairs which I cannot control. The less old are gravely disadvantaged in our society. We have rights too. Urgent action is needed."

At this point Arnold said he would be happy to arrange a remedial class for under-age gnomes, and we all saw the funny side of it. But I can foresee further conflict between Cecil and Vincent, and I was relieved when we decided to leave the matter to a sub-committee.

I was staying on at school for the governors' meeting, which I then remembered was to be preceded by a demonstration of the new computer by our sixth formers. So I suggested we see the display, and offered to share my whole food pot cullid sandwiches with him. But he declined, lighting another cigarette and going off to the labs while I dictated some more letters.

Then we gathered with the governors in the computer room again.



Vincent Pile: "The Atomic One"

and Kevin Harbottle - who is off to Oxford next term - put the machine through its paces while other sixth formers helped. I could see the governors were most impressed, and all went well until Vincent Pile said:

"Now - let me choose a programme at random and then you will see the remarkable versatility of the ZK 857 chip." He chose one from the shelf labelled Bimominal series investigations, but Kevin said "Er - that one is, er, not quite ready yet". "No matter," said Vincent, putting the cassette into the slot while Kevin looked more and more apprehensive. Then we all watched as the heading came up: "Sixth form computer dating exercise. Enter your vital statistics below. All inlets catered for! Suddenly we saw, 'Angie: 38, 24, 36. Likes porn movies, Yorke bars and Elton John'."

I heard the vicar gasp, and then I reached forward with great *zing* and pulled out the plug. Even Vincent Pile seemed nonplussed for once, and the Vicar said, "I think, Dr Smellcroft, we must keep these infernal machines in their place and introduce the most severe security precautions. Much though I admire the industry of all these young people

here, we must remember that evil lurks whenever the spirit gives way to the work of the machine."

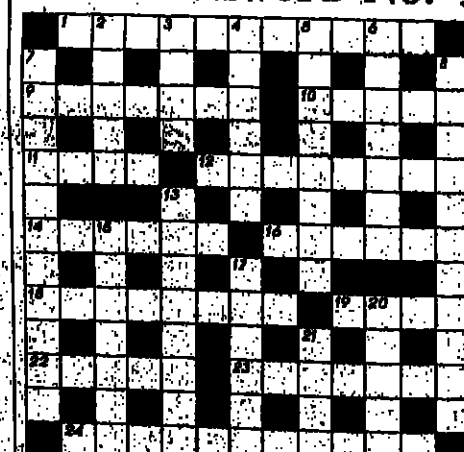
I'm afraid this unfortunate incident will set back our computer plans rather seriously. I was quite confident as Vincent Pile stepped away so nervously at another cigarette, and we settled down to a routine discussion of the latest drama near the craft block.

Maurice H...

Next week

Jeromy Buglor, producer of *Shogun*, a new television series, describes how it was made. A girl expelled: an extract from Henry Handel Richardson's *The Girl of Wisdom*. Arts: Victor Newman looks at a critical eye over the ICMA's new town planning exhibition; Mark Barr on the work of Angela Carter; Gillian Peele on American history.

TES Crossword No. 12



Across
1. Head rule in the Julian calendar (4)
2. Business follows in a state (7)
3. 12th-century Seljuq ruler (10)
4. Army unit (5)
5. Conventional fare (4)
6. Repeat is deliberate (7)
7. Officer found on the M17 (6)
8. New lot for one that hasn't managed to get a place (6)
9. Allowed because? (8)
10. What sound for a stern old Roman? (4)
11. A patch out on a cuff, a (6)
12. Noise, a wild flower (7)
13. Sand, bond or bind (7)

Down
1. Avoid in a London city (5)
2. Impressive (6)
3. (Crest) - showing nationality? (10)
4. It will mingle with the crowd to get food (5)
5. Novel time for awakening (11)
6. Time (6, 5)
7. Shaken and upset (8)
8. Undistinguished (6)
9. Enter your vital statistics (11)
10. A right angle (5)
11. Rule like a lady? (6)

Solution to Puzzle No. 11

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Labour moves against SDP in student politics

by Biddy Passmore

The Labour Party is starting to fight back against the new Social Democratic Party, using student politics as the arena.

A confidential report to the party's national executive committee is said to show that the Labour students' organization (NOLS) has far less to fear from the emergence of the SDP than has the Federation of Conservative Students.

But it acknowledges that the new party could succeed in recruiting widely among new students this autumn. And it urges Labour MPs to spend more time addressing student meetings, an activity many are said to consider a waste of time.

The report, which was written by Labour's student organizer, Mr John Dennis, was com-

missioned by Labour's organization subcommittee chaired by Mr Tony Benn, who was anxious to find out the extent of the SDP threat in student circles. Another subcommittee, the youth subcommittee chaired by Miss Joan Maynard, has told NOLS that it wants to see 50,000 copies of an anti-SDP leaflet produced, although the money for it has still to be approved.

Mr Dennis apparently discloses that the SDP has so far failed to bring large numbers of new activists into the student movement. Most of its student members are either Liberals - encouraged to have joint membership by the Union of Liberal Students - or disaffected ex-members of the Federation of Conservative Students, where right-wingers are now in control. Only about 30 Labour students are estimated to have

left their party to join the SDP. The report is said to point out that NOLS, the only left-wing student organization affiliated to the Labour Party, is also the only one to have kept its membership up in recent years. It now has about 8,000 members. The FCS, which claims to have 13,700, is said to have suffered declining membership recently.

The report's analysis is borne out by last week's defection of eight former Tory student leaders to the SDP, three of whom are former FCS chairmen. The defectors all complained they had been unable to get a hearing for alternative views within the Conservative Party. This week, spokesmen from Smith Square say the party would now pay more attention to differences of opinion expressed by FCS members and Young Conservatives.

Fixed contract staff in jeopardy

by Sarah Bayliss and David Ross

The number of teachers on fixed term contracts is increasing and government spending cuts are making them especially vulnerable.

A graphic example of how the axe can fall on teachers on short term contracts occurred in Scotland this week where the Lothian region, which includes Edinburgh, have threatened not to renew the contracts of 1,000 teachers because of government-ordered cuts.

And this week the biggest teachers' union in England, the National Union of Teachers, expressed the fear that English and Welsh authorities could follow suit.

One authority is to wield the axe at the end of this month on 79 teachers on fixed contracts. Teachers in Oxfordshire who have been on these contracts because falling pupil numbers were expected will lose their jobs from August 31, although the county council has offered some of them new jobs. A spokesman for the NUT said this week: "There is no doubt at all that more authorities are resorting to fixed term contracts as a way of controlling teacher numbers."

"We have argued with the L.E.s that this isn't the way to run a service, on a year by year basis. It is extremely disruptive for schools."

He said that unless teachers had been in continuous employment for two years they did not generally get protection under the Employment Protection Act.

The terms of fixed contracts varied from one authority to another. The NUT considered it proper to use them when a teacher was filling in for another on maternity leave or sabbatical, or long illness.

"It is quite improper to use these contracts because an LEA anticipates falling rolls or spending cut backs in the future."

In Oxfordshire, teachers were employed on one year contracts because the county expected falling rolls. Their contracts are up on August 31, and although some have been found other jobs, a proportion will have no choice but to leave the service.

In Scotland, the largest teachers' union, the Educational Institute of Scotland, with 8,000 members in Lothian region, will not cover the work of any teacher of a fixed term contract, and they will resist any compulsory transfer. But they will not strike until they know next week if the region intends to lift its moratorium on new spending; a meeting of the local executive of the EIS

decided on Tuesday.

The EIS was considering industrial action in response to Lothian's announcement that it would not renew the fixed term contracts of nearly 1,000 teachers and further education lecturers. This followed the region's decision last week to implement budget cuts of £15m and the imposition of a moratorium on new spending, in the wake of the Scottish Secretary of State's declared intent to cut nearly £1.5m from the weekly payment of rate support grant until savings of £30m had been achieved.

After the region's announcement on Monday it became clear that the combined effect of their proposed measures would mean about 3,000 people involved in the provision of education within the region losing their jobs.

On top of the 1,000 or so teachers (544 day school and 400 FE), 168 ancillary staff were also to be affected by the non-renewal of fixed term contracts. The moratorium on new spending, however, would also affect a great many more jobs, which was something that councillors did not seem to appreciate.

Mrs Phyllis Herriot, Labour group leader, told the press afterwards that she did not think any of the councillors voting realized the number of people on fixed term contracts when the moratorium was agreed. In fact, if the moratorium is continued for any length of time 1,500 teachers in evening classes in community education and 450 part-time youth and community workers would not have their contracts renewed next month.

An additional 72 permanent teaching posts would not be filled. The council also approved the freezing of 63 full-time equivalent specialist teaching posts - accounting for jobs for 123 teachers.

After the proposed cuts were announced earlier this week teachers' union leaders met council officials and managed to secure an assurance that a recommendation to lift the moratorium would go before the Labour group this week, with a view to having a council meeting next week.

For its part the EIS will continue sanctions until all their fixed-term contract colleagues have been reinstated.

It now seems likely that Lothian will have to consider additional cuts of about £10m if the moratorium is to be lifted, which would bring it close to £20m package rejected last week despite the fact it would have meant no redundancies.



Keeping the cheek out of the tongue

"Mornin' all - I mean, good morning children. Today we are going to talk proper - I mean, unmarked received pronunciation, known as RP for short. But we mustn't talk posh - I mean marked received pronunciation - because that would make us sound like Roy Jenkins and that would never do, would it?"

That could be the daily school greeting in a world controlled by Professor John Honey, head of the School of Education at Leicester Polytechnic. He thinks all teachers and pupils should be made aware of the social realities of Britain in 1981, which is that RP (preferably "unmarked") is a passport to success and Scottish and West Country O.K. but Cockney, Scouse and Brummie are death to social mobility.

Most education experts skirt warily round the problem of accents in school. Not so Professor Honey, who jumps in eagerly with both feet. "At Leicester, we would encourage teachers to be bilingual," he told the TES. "That is, to be able to talk proper to pupils and their parents but to show that they have a number of accents at their command."

At parents' evenings, for instance, RP is a must. "If a teacher is talking to little Mary and her mum and dad, he should not use unstandard English because it is a formal occasion," says Professor Honey. "If he spoke dialect, the parents would regard him as patronising."

But what if dialect is the teacher's natural form of speech? "Ah well, then the parents wouldn't think you were being patronising," admits the Professor.

Walk experience: 17 year old Georgia Miller, dressed as a fashion model under a Youth Opportunities Programme scheme, shows a newcomer how it is done. Georgina, just out of her YOP course, is already earning £150 a week. See page 8.

Death in Spain of Peter Kennedy

Mr Peter Kennedy, president of the National Union of Teachers until their annual conference this year, has died suddenly while on holiday in Spain, aged 60.

Mr Kennedy, who leaves a widow, Mona, and two daughters, is believed to have suffered a heart attack. He was president of the union for the year 1980/81 and has been a teacher since 1948. At the time of his death, he was head-teacher of Great Wakering County Primary school in Essex.



"You're in luck - we didn't understand a word he was saying."



Cecil Stonejaw: "It's mediocre technology and lousy history"

UCCA assessing A level results for university places Sifting the campus candidates

by Biddy Passmore

The Universities Central Council on Admissions (UCCA) set to work this week to try to sort out the effects of last week's A level results.

No surprising fluctuations in standards were reported from the various GCE boards this year. Results were well up to the usual level, with more than two-thirds of candidates gaining a pass. The Oxford and Cambridge board said its pass rate of about 70 per cent was at least as good as last

year and probably better than most years. UCCA will not be able to tell until next week how many places will be available through the last-minute clearing system this year, although the total is certain to be down on last year's 9,000. Some universities are still considering whether to opt out of the system but not - as was reported last week - Manchester University, which has already de-

clared that clearing places will be available. By Tuesday of this week, UCCA has already received 3,000 applications for clearing places, nearly all from candidates who got their A levels last year rather than from sixth formers who had done unexpectedly well or badly this year. The flow of applications is expected to increase until the first week in September, by which time last year the council had received 26,000.

Coventry council to hold referendum on cuts

by Sarah Bayliss

A Labour-led council will carry out a referendum next week, asking the public whether it should make cuts or increase the rates to maintain services.

Coventry city council has said that to satisfy government demands it would have to cut £14m off the education budget in the middle of this year. That would mean axing at least 100 teachers' jobs, reducing capital allowances to schools by 20 per cent and raising the price of school meals from 45 to 50 pence.

Alternatively, if the government-ordered cuts totalling £3m are ignored the council is threatened with losing £5m in grant and a 30 to 35 per cent rate rise would be necessary next spring to maintain services. A household currently paying £300 a year in rates would face a bill of £400 a year.

Coventry city council is taking an unprecedented step by presenting its dilemma to the public next Thursday in a referendum costing £88,000. The idea is of particular significance since Mr Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, has indicated strongly that legislation will be introduced this autumn requiring local councils to hold a referendum or full council election to get approval for a supplementary rate rise.

The Coventry poll - which city leaders deny has been inspired by Mr Heseltine's remarks - will be open to everyone on the city's electoral roll, but it is not binding on the council.

"While this city-wide testing of opinion will not be binding on the council, it will, in a very complex situation, help to influence spending patterns for this year and the next few years," states a large advertise-

ment placed twice in the local evening paper. Mr Arthur Waugh, Labour leader, said he hoped the turnout would be at least as high as in local elections - between 30 and 40 per cent. A vote of that size would be "judged very carefully" although it would not commit the council to a course of action.

He said that while his party had a mandate to run council affairs it had become necessary to consult the public. "Since we were elected in 1979 the Government's attitude towards local government has changed in an extraordinary way. Mr Heseltine has introduced penalties for spending and we think it's only fair to give the public a say."

The city, he said, had already returned this year's budget by Whitehall's July 31 deadline, with no changes in it. However, in the light of government threats, councillors wanted to be prepared for the possibility of losing grant in the autumn.

He confirmed that 12 Labour rebels whose policy is to oppose all cuts, had voted against the referendum; 15 Conservatives also voted against the idea on grounds of cost.

Mr Charles Ward, education chairman, denied the Conservatives' suggestion that the £14m education cuts, listed in the local paper advertisement were a scaremongering exercise. "The list is very real indeed," he said.

He said teachers' jobs were being held vacant and expenditure on repairs and maintenance of schools was being held back, in a "holding operation" awaiting the outcome of the referendum and government action. "If we had made the appointments we would have left no options open," he said.

Teachers urged: spell out glue-sniffing perils

Glue sniffing will not be stopped by a "shock-horror" approach, health educationists asserted this week.

Teachers should try to prevent solvent sniffing by spelling out the dangers in group discussions along with other health education topics at school.

Another important factor is the child's self-esteem, says Val Rowell, area health education officer of Leeds Area Health Authority, and Dr J. W. Wood, senior registrar of the Regional Drug Dependency Unit, Stanley Road Hospital, Wakefield.

In the current issue of the Health Education Journal, they call for health education programmes which would explore "the reasons why young people want to try glue sniffing". They point out that glue-sniffing is an inaccurate catchphrase, as a wide variety of solvents are sniffed including anti-freeze, nail polish remover, door polish and paint thin-

ners. In the same journal, Mr Ian Peers, assistant director of the Teachers' Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Education, suggests that community health education teams should be set up to link the health, social and education services. These would advise schools on how to tackle problems of solvent abuse if they occurred.

He warns: "Children who have been repeatedly exposed to the exciting and subjectively self-rewarding effects of solvents might be at a higher than average risk to become predisposed to multiple drug abuse in later life."

Between 1970 and 1976 45 people died in Britain from solvent abuse. The habit is confined mainly to young people aged between 11 and 16 and it is most common among boys than girls.

Health Education Journal, Volume 40 Number 2, Health Education Council, 78 New Oxford Street, London, WC1A 1AH, 75 pence.

Bristol University paper sale

Bristol University, which is to lose its status as a university in 1982, is selling off its library of books and papers. The sale is being held at the Bristol University Library, 11, College Street, Bristol, from 10.30 to 12.30 on Tuesday, August 25. The sale is free of charge and open to all.

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Supply of teachers in dispute

by Bert Lodge

The Government's advisory committee on the supply and education of teachers (ACSET) has rejected forecasts by the Government's own experts on teacher supply over the next 15 years.

At the same time it has confirmed a report in the TES July 24 that it is recommending a cut of 25 per cent in the 1982 entry to postgraduate teacher training and a reduction of 10 per cent a year in the planned output of teachers over the next decade.

The committee has told Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, that it cannot accept some of the long range forecasts made by the Department of Education on how teaching vacancies will be filled from now until the nineties. The disagreement centres on what proportion of jobs will be taken by re-entrants to the profession from the pool of inactive teachers.

A teacher manpower model drawn up by the DES forecast an annual average of 6,000 posts a year, going to returners in the early eighties, increasing to 11,000 in the late eighties and to what the committee calls an "unprecedented" 18,000 in the early nineties.

Over this period the annual number of vacancies is expected to rise from about 10,000 a year to 30,000 and the DES forecasts that up to half of these will be filled by returners.

"The committee has felt unable to accept this," Dr Clifford Butler, chairman of the committee, wrote to Mr Carlisle this week. "The committee takes the view that it would be dangerous to base decisions about the future teacher training system on the high success rate ascribed to returners by the teacher manpower model."

The committee's view is that employers will prefer newly trained teachers, partly because these will on average be better trained than returners and partly because local authorities will want to preserve an age balance in their staffrooms and ensure an inflow of new ideas.

The committee also doubts if a sufficient number of returners, bearing in mind that their mobility is likely to be reduced by family commitments, will be available in the right specialties in the right place.

"It seems imprudent to assume that if vacancies for teachers are as low as predicted... the proportion of them taken by returners should be higher than about 40 per cent."

The committee's recommendations will reduce the target, fixed in 1977, of an output of 17,000 new teachers a year to about 15,500. Bearing in mind the numbers who for one reason or another do not seek posts, the annual yield would be about 13,500 new entrants.

The one year cut in entry to postgraduate certificates of education courses in 1982 will screw the 1983 output of teachers down to no more than 12,000. No cuts have been specified in the three and four year Bachelor of Education courses because they have under-recruited by 40 per cent over the past two years.

The committee says that if for all reason returners do not seek and secure posts on the scale envisaged there could be a shortage of teachers by the end of the century.



A level of distinction at 10 years old

Ruth Lawrence, the 10-year-old Huddersfield girl who last week heard she had passed A level in pure maths, seven months after getting an A at O level, has never been to school. She has been taught at home by parents, both computer consultants, though Kitem education officials claim they could cater for her special talents. "If she had been presented at one of our schools we would make every attempt to cater fully for all her educational needs and aptitudes," said Mr Ian McMillan, assistant education officer.

MP demands inquiry into absence of Russian teaching

Russian teaching is being "discouraged and extinguished" in Britain, a Labour MP claimed this week.

Mr George Foulkes, member for South Ayrshire, has written to Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, to demand an immediate inquiry into the absence of Russian teaching in British schools. He is also urging the Commons Select Committee on Education to investigate the matter.

"I was shocked to learn that the Lothian district in Scotland is the only place in the whole of Britain which has an identifiable degree of Russian teaching," he said this week. "Elsewhere, it is almost non-existent."

Mr Foulkes, who was member of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, which deplored the linguistic standards of British diplomats abroad, argues that the Government have their priorities wrong. "We are spending more and more billions of pounds on weapons to kill Russians and can't spare a small amount to help make friends with them."

The MP's concern was aroused when Russian teachers in Scotland told him that Macmillan's, the publishers, was to stop printing the Russian Schools Council Russian course because of lack of demand.

But Russian language teaching has been declining for over ten years - the most extreme example of the decline in all foreign languages except French. Between 1970 and 1971, the number of O level entries in Russian in England and Wales fell from 3,370 to 1,809 and the number of A level entries from 810 to 492. Since then, O level entries appear to have stabilized slightly but the number of A level Russian candidates dropped again, from 503 to 372 between 1978 and 1980.

This is reflected in the recent demand by the University Grants Committee to reduce the number of Russian departments. But Mr Foulkes says that will only make matters worse.

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Chief officers row over riots

Two chief officers have fallen out over where the blame lies for recent street rioting and the part education has to play.

Mr Michael Harrison, director of education in Sheffield, had objected to remarks by Mr Keith Robinson, director for Salford, which disclosed "his own distrust for the influence of the education service in these troubled times and for the integrity of his colleagues in youth and community work."

Mr Michael Harrison expressed his objections in a letter to the journal Education last week. He said in the letter that he would be sending further thoughts "less expressible in public" to Mr Robinson in private.

A month ago Mr Harrison told the Society of Education Officers that these days there were few institutions more stable and orderly than schools. He praised the work of youth and community workers and stressed the need to spend money on this part of the service.

Later, Mr Robinson wrote in Education: "It is certainly in Merseyside grievances had been exploited 'by people whose motivation was hardly the improvement of Liverpool 8. I would not like to see that note of the organizers were employed in the education service in its widest sense'."

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Computer studies course lacked continuity say students Finals failure blamed on teachers

by Biddy Passmore

A complaint that bad teaching led a number of students to fail their finals was to be put to the rector of the Polytechnic of Central London yesterday.

The students' union president Mr Pat Bryden, was to meet the rector yesterday to demand action in response to complaints from students that bad teaching in the second year of their computer studies course caused them to fail their finals.

Most criticized is the lack of continuity in teaching of the course's scientific option, where 11 out of 12

students failed. Overall, 33 out of 50 students failed to gain a clear pass in their computer studies HND this year.

Yesterday's meeting with the rector, Professor Colin Adamson, was expected to lead to a compromise. The polytechnic is understood to be considering laying on a special remedial course for the students affected. It is not clear if that would be restricted to those students who took the scientific option.

But Mr Bryden made it plain this week that, if the proposal proved

unacceptable to the students, he would be taking legal advice today, on the grounds that the polytechnic would have neglected its duty towards its students.

The students are particularly worried by their failure because the HND course is to be replaced next term by a new higher diploma validated jointly by the Technician Education Council (TEC) and the Business Education Council (BEC). They fear this would make it impossible for the unsuccessful candidates to resit their HND diploma.

TUC outlines £24bn plan for reconstructing Britain

by Richard Garner and Mark Jackson

Massive renewed investment in school and college is part of a £24bn plan put forward yesterday by the TUC for reconstructing Britain and reducing unemployment.

The TUC claims that its programme could create 500,000 jobs over the next five years, 7,000 of them in education construction projects alone. It would have a big impact on youth employment and involve pouring extra resources into training. In a 5,000 word document setting out the proposals to modernize the country's communications infrastructure, improve housing, and reequip the public services, the TUC says:

"The latest school inspectors' report found that over half the local education authorities in England and Wales have reduced repairs and maintenance. The inspectorate also found that of 900 school premises inspected, 300 were in a poor physical condition."

In order to provide decent school and college buildings for all our children, these deficiencies must be put right and, where necessary, new buildings provided."

"The exact cost of this is not known. But the government is planning to cut £125 million from capital spending in 1981/82, compared with

1979/80. Instead, this money should be used to repair and maintain schools and provide new buildings."

The TUC argues that investment in the public sector will boost activity and encourage private sector investment but that it should not be coupled with a cut in the public services. "It is no good building new hospitals if there are no funds to provide for nurses and teachers to staff them," it adds.

The document also urges a substantial increase in assistance to inner city areas, calling for £2,000m extra to be spent over the next five years on land acquisition, clearance, house renovation, leisure and community facilities as well as building new industrial premises in the inner cities.

Although the document does not refer directly to training, Mr Kenneth Graham, the TUC's assistant general secretary, who is a Manpower Services Commission, told the TES yesterday that it would not be possible without "a sound training infrastructure", and warned that the Government at present appeared to be doing its best to undermine the training structure through the new Employment and Training Act and by cuts in the commission's budget.

Suffolk job bonanza likely soon

County council officials in Suffolk may be hunting for up to 50 extra teachers next month if the expected number of extra pupils stay on at school because they have failed to find jobs.

After contacting headteachers towards the end of last term, county council officials estimated that about 600 extra pupils may be returning to the classroom instead of joining the dole queue in September.

They immediately alerted senior members of the county council's education committee warning them they may be faced with a request to take on an emergency ration of extra teachers at the beginning of the autumn.

County council officials said the teachers were likely to be given supply posts - and reckoned there would be no difficulty in finding enough teachers to take on the jobs. Many of them would be women seeking to return to the profession after having had children.

However, they stressed that any jobs found were likely to be temporary posts since most of the youngsters returning to school were unlikely to give a commitment to staying for the full year.

Removing incompetents is a 'gut-churning task' say heads

Many head teachers are already performing "gut-churning" tasks in order to rid the profession of incompetent teachers, one of the leaders of the biggest headteachers' organizations said this week.

Mr Dick Foster, deputy general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, was responding to an article in the magazine Education, calling on headteachers to be more diligent in preparing the groundwork to enable local education authorities to dismiss incompetent teachers.

In the article, Mr Keith Robinson, chief education officer of Salford, says: "The head cannot just complain about one of his staff and expect the 'office' to do all that is necessary."

"Responsibility brings with it the need to perform distasteful, gut-churning tasks, such as providing the evidence needed and conducting painful interviews. If the initial groundwork is not done properly in the school, which is the only place it can take place, then the 'office' has no chance."

But Mr Foster said that many head teachers were already doing the necessary groundwork but felt that at the end of the day they were not receiving enough support from their local education authorities. "They often do prepare the reports and do the 'gut-churning' jobs," he added. "If there are some that are reluctant to act, it may be because they know from experience they will get no support at the end of the day."

School trip death inquiry

Education officials are awaiting the result of a Spanish judge's investigation into the death of a young boy on a school trip abroad before deciding whether to take any action.

Fourteen-year-old Gordon Smith, from Crowthill School, Oldham, is believed to have been electrocuted by a Space Invader machine he was playing with while on holiday with

other boys in Majorca on a trip organized by teachers at the school.

The school trip returned from Majorca last week and a spokesman for the local education authority said it would have to wait and see the result of the judge's investigation before deciding whether it was necessary to take any action.

Manchester parents special school fight

Parents are campaigning to keep open a special school for delicate children run by Manchester education authority.

Crumpsall school was described by an assistant education officer this week as "an anachronism". "It was built 50 years ago when the strains of life were different; all the professionals involved think it has outlived its usefulness," Mr

Adrian Parsons of Manchester education office said.

But parents disagree. They claim that there are many children who need to go to Crumpsall but are being turned away because of the threat of closure.

Mr Parsons said most of the children did not need medical attention and the majority would be transferred to maladjusted day schools.

Bid to save neighbourhood secondaries

Parents in a South London borough are campaigning for the retention of small neighbourhood secondary schools.

A survey conducted by the parent-teacher association of Norbury Manor high school for boys in Croydon showed a majority in favour of schools with about 600 pupils rather than with 900 pupils or more.

The parents claim that small neigh-

bourhood schools have worked well in the least prosperous parts of the borough and that they are more popular than large schools.

Norbury Manor boys' school is due to close under a borough-wide reorganization scheme. The PTA claims more than 6000 people have signed a petition to keep it as a four-form entry school.

How the Social Democrats run Dudley

Sarah Bayliss reports on three councillors who changed the complexion of an education committee

An extraordinary deal struck by three Social Democrats with a group of Conservatives in a "hung" authority in the West Midlands has benefited education by £1.25m over the past 18 months.

The deal which both parties on Dudley council prefer to call a "working agreement" will break up at the end of the summer. The Social Democrats, who found themselves holding the balance of power after elections in May 1980, say they will have achieved what they wanted in the time available.

Their latest news is that the Conservative council has rejected mid-year cuts worth £5.6m demanded by Mr Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, and has sent back its original budget, unchanged.

The Social Democrats are now keen to disassociate themselves from the deal so they can organize their party for the local elections next May.

Both sides always recognized it was a temporary, practical arrangement. Mr Tom Clitheroe, the leading SD councillor told the TES last week: "It's never been a coalition because we weren't politically aligned with the Tories. There were times when I thought it wouldn't last more than a few weeks."

The end of the working agreement will mean Tom Clitheroe resigns as chairman of the education committee. He won that prize in May, last year when he and two others, calling themselves plain Democrats, won three key seats. The Conservatives who had 30 seats compared with the SDs' 23, took office and consolidated power to the Democrats by handing them the education chair

and power over education's spending levels.

The deal was all the more extraordinary since all three Democrats were Labour rebels who resigned from the party three months before the elections over the nation's "drift to the left". The Labour group they had abandoned refused to do any deals. "I would have preferred an all-party coalition but Labour wouldn't talk to us," Tom Clitheroe had been leader for five years; Kate Rogers was secretary of the Labour group and Arthur Fisher was finance spokesman. They joined the SDP as soon as it was launched this year.

An opportunity to "do something about education in Dudley" was too good to miss and it became their priority, according to Tom Clitheroe. They had two main objectives: "Happily we've achieved them both."

The first main aim was to give Dudley's education spending a massive shot in the arm. Since the authority was created in 1974 it has lurked around the bottom of every league table in education. Actual spending figures for 1979-80 show it had the worst primary pupil teacher ratio, the lowest spending per primary pupil and the second worst secondary pupil teacher ratio in the country.

Since July last year £1.25m extra cash has been pumped in. A rate rise of 25 per cent helped pay for that,

although the Conservatives would have preferred a 20 per cent rise. But from September 43 extra primary teachers have been employed and 30 more will be employed from next April. The SDP's aim has been to ensure that all children can start school in the September term before their fifth birthday.

From this September 81 extra secondary teachers will be on the pay roll and by next year school leavers will be able to get on to the sixth form without having to wait for a place.

Until now, four school sixth forms plus the further education college have catered for 300 A level students: 60 per cent of all A level groups have been found to contain fewer than five students. "We must not and cannot maintain so many sixth forms," says Mr Clitheroe, himself an FE lecturer at a college in Birmingham.

The new tertiary college for 300 A level students plus 20 other full-time equivalents will be based on the site of the existing FE college. Once Halesowen has been reorganized the council should tackle re-organization in other parts of Dudley creating tertiary colleges there if it is practicable, say the Social Democrats.

They are confident that after the May 1982 elections they will be returned in sufficient numbers to carry out their education policies. They want to continue investing in the service, lifting it further up the

19s - including the dismantling of a middle age school system. The plans have just been submitted to the Department of Education.

If Mr Carlisle gives approval, two primaries and one middle school will close and two secondaries for the 13s to 18s will merge. "The consultation process has been the most detailed, time-consuming and productive of any carried out by the authority," says the report to a report on the

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national league tables.

Dudley's gang of three were all involved in the official SDP launch this year, manning the West Midlands telephone bank and answering queries. The SDP at present has 3,500 members in the West Midlands and 150 in Dudley.

A selection panel will be choosing candidates this autumn. They intend to contest almost all the 72 seats which are up for grabs because of boundary changes. Tom Clitheroe thinks they will do well. "There's a pragmatism in the West Midlands that is attracted to the new party."

In October the SDP's policies will become clearer to the public through a series of national policy documents and a "rolling conference" to be held in Perth, Bradford and London over seven days.

The Schools Council has an internal review, as its future is considered Subject teachers fear loss of influence

by Bob Doe

The Schools Council may scrap its 15 subject committees of specialist teachers and subject experts to save money.

The subject teacher associations were worried this week that the idea which the council is discussing could deny them the small amount of influence they have achieved in the council's work in recent years.

The 15 committees cover art, craft, design and technology; classics; English; general studies; geography; history; home economics; mathematics; modern languages; music; physical education; religious education; science and social sciences.

At the moment the Government is looking into whether a Schools Council is needed in the future and, if so, how it should operate. At the same time the council is preparing to put its own house in order through an internal review of its working practices. The scrapping of the subject committees is one move being considered in this by the powerful finance and priorities committee.

The council said this week it was too soon to talk of the demise of these committees. But the council is considering whether special *ad hoc*



Mr Mann: We have got to be satisfied.

groups set up to look into specific issues or some other way to work more closely with subject teacher associations might be better.

It is argued that this could mean the council working more closely with teachers as well as saving money. The subject committee meetings can cost nearly £40,000 a year.

Mr John Mann, secretary of the council, said, "We have got to be satisfied we are making the best use of the council's limited funds and

that we have the most efficient committee structure."

All the council's committees were being scrutinized. "The subject committees are not being singled out for specific attention."

There has been some dissatisfaction on both sides recently with the work of the subject committees - or the lack of it. The committees were left untouched by the earlier internal review of the council's operations in 1978.

It is suggested within the council that the new way of deciding priorities and planning the council's work some years ahead leaves the committees with little to discuss or recommend.

On the other hand, some subject associations believe there is plenty for the council to talk about and take action on, and complain that recent subject committee meetings have been cancelled because there were supposedly nothing for them to discuss.

Mr Alan Hall, chairman of the subject association umbrella group, the Council of Subject Teacher Associations said, "Having worked so hard to get a voice on the Schools

Council and to be consulted on their special interests, the subject teacher associations would not now like to see the subject committees swept away."

The leaders of some individual subject associations put it even more strongly. One described the plan as "the final step in dismantling any serious role the council might play," and another said it was difficult already to make your voice heard.

A spokesman for the Association for Science Education said: "Representation on the subject committees is at present the only way the specialist advice of the subject teacher associations can be fed into the Schools Council." If these committees were abolished "some other means whereby subject teacher associations could have a regular input into the Schools Council would have to be found."

The National Union of Teachers believes there is a case for reforming the subject committees but not for scrapping them. The union has told the Government's review body that the subject committees were seldom told what is going on in other committees or given specific jobs to do.

In brief Sports day for disabled

Steve Overt, the Olympic medalist runner, is to meet sports day for physically handicapped children from four East Sussex schools. The day, on September 24 at the Brighton Centre, will be about 60 children competing in field events, with some specially designed for completion in wheelchairs.

Steve Overt attended the first sports day last year, which was in the East Sussex Schools Sports Association for the Physically Handicapped being set up.

Grant for equal opportunities

Two officers of the Schools Council have won a two-year grant of £10,000 to set up an information resource centre to help teachers promote equal opportunities. The grant, which has been awarded to the Equal Opportunities Commission, goes to Ms Lesley Keston, adviser at the council, and Gaby Weiner, co-ordinator of activities.

The EOC has granted £60,000 a dozen educational and social projects for the 1981-82 financial year, selected from 42 applications. They include £2,505 for the Youth Council to help it produce educational pack for voluntary organizations on sex discrimination.

Cooperation

A new body has been set up to foster cooperation between education and industry. The Open Learning Federation has about 120 founding members: universities, extra-mural departments, polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of further education, the Council for Educational Technology and the National Foundation for Educational Research.

Dyslexia book

The Dyslexia Institute will be launching the first edition of a handbook for teachers and parents on post-16 open learning. The handbook will cover recognition of the condition, teaching writing and spelling, parents' rights and legislation, reviews, and how to pass examinations. The handbook will cost £1.25 and can be ordered from the Dyslexia Institute, 133 Garsington Road, Staines, TW18 2AJ.

Training level

The Institute of Purchasing and Supply is launching a new programme in September to train people at a parvocultural rather than a professional level.

Called the Association of Supervisors in Purchasing and Supply, the new body will provide more educational targets for those who do not want to take the more demanding course leading to the professional examinations of the Institute of Purchasing and Supply. Details of courses from the Institute of Purchasing and Supply, House, High Street, Aspley, Leicestershire, LE15 7RU.

Winter woollies

The Knitting Craft Group of the Grand Metropolitan Hotel is organizing four winter workshops for teachers on creative wool and yarn. Prices start at £15 and courses will be held in London, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Darlington. Details from the Knitting Craft Group, P.O. Box 1, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO13 9JF.

Day boy move

Haileybury, the boys' boarding school in Hertford, is to start admitting day boys in September next year. Day Boy House will consist of work rooms for different subjects, as well as changing and recreation facilities.

Bob Dyson attended two Open University summer schools recently, one at Westfield College, London for a drama course, the other at York University on poetry. This is his report

When solo scholars assemble

Coffee. They, all 15 of them, wanted more coffee. Three in the morning and my room bulged with a simultaneous discussion on T.S. Eliot and plans for a barbecue. The night was spent in coffee spoons, indeed. Social life at an OU summer school goes on forever like the notorious art school dance. Until dawn at least.

"We're not on the literature course, we're poetry in motion," said one of a band of technology students in the corner.

"It's the morning, wake up, it's the morning," I had fallen asleep. Breakfast in the vast canteen was just minutes away, followed by the first seminar of the week.

"You are about to have the experience of your life," Gregg, the Irish playwright from Margate, had told bewildered summer school novices, as they dragged their book-laden suitcases on to the turf of the York campus. For Gregg, kitted out like a sort of Celtic samurai, (every-thing crammed into a minute backpack) and myself, it was the start of the second leg of a two-week marathon which had started with a residential drama course at Westfield College, Hampstead, where throw-away remarks like "You have come the text but you haven't quite got the draft out" created much rustling of paper at seminars.

Seven days of plays and players had been a great leveller, so the reality of the trip from King's Cross to York had difficulty fighting its way through on the Inter-City 125.

The week at the edge of Hampstead Heath had been crammed with insight into the work and political purpose of Bertolt Brecht (*Mother Courage and Her Children* and *The Life of Galileo*). See it at the National Theatre. But is it Brecht? (Sondheim) (*Milk and Honey*) (*The Cherry Orchard* and *Three Sisters*).

En masse, 180 of us packed along to see *The Misanthrope* at the Roundhouse, *Sergeant Musgrave's Dance* at the Cottesloe, and *Shadow of a Gunman* at the Warehouse.

The next day, after each performance, an actor, director or writer came along to talk about production and often sparked a very lively series of debates.

One such target was Tom Courtenay. The main task of an actor is to keep the audience awake, he said. Fine. But for me the event of the week was the appearance of Maïssa Maïmona, a leading figure in the Balansat Theatre Company from Soweto, who talked about the plight of black theatre in South Africa. The room seemed to lift off with emotion as he quoted some lines from his latest play *The Hungry Earth*.

A different kind of black theatre was emerging in the ghettos, he said, which challenged the plays served up in plush, velvet-seated, white liberal theatres of Jo'burg and Pretoria. His plays by many others were shown in makeshift huts with corrugated roofs, Athol Fugard, at your heart's content, seemed to be his message.

It was hard to follow that but John Burgess, director of *Sergeant Mus-*

grave, did a very good job with a clear picture of the satisfaction of bringing the work of the best and most relevant playwright of the past 30 years to the stage, John Arden.

Burgess was workmanlike in condemning the likes of Tom Stoppard: "a fooler" and Edward Bond's plays: "fashionable pap".

In the first published text of *Sergeant Musgrave* (1959), John Arden wrote: "I have endeavoured to write about the violence that is so evident in the world and to do so through a story that is partly wish fulfillment."

Mind you, as I stared for the first time in my life into the barrel of a real Gatling gun - I gleaned a clear picture of his line of thought.

Sometime during the week, so clock-full that it seemed like a very pleasant year, there was a variety show put on by people involved in the course, many of them professional actors and bread and butter drama teachers.

At a somewhat hog-whimpering party later, one tutor was insisting that there were indeed five sisters in Chekhov's masterpiece, as his unit intake of Frascati approached telephone numbers.

The Royal Wedding. Nothing on the day's programme allowed for July 29 prime-time viewing, so it was interesting to see who would be the first to crack as our group of 15 sat in the sun for a seminar on Shaw, at fresco.

Around half past 10, a music teacher from Hemel Hempstead spluttered that they could have their Wedgie Benn as long as he could have his Royal Wedding and slipped away through the bushes in the direction of the television room.

The main feature of the week was the diversity of the different characters and different occupations, all gathered together; many teachers of course, actors both resting and working, lawyers and sprinklings of policemen and women and a nun who gamely removed her habit to take part in a theme based on Chekhov.

All summer schools have the same basic ingredients - people: hundreds of them and at first you don't know any of them, not only that, but they are all younger/older/prettier/handsomer/cleverer/wittier than you are and oozing with self-confidence, but by the second day most of these illusions have been thrown right out of the window, so by the last night at a deliciously swarty and loud disco which was welcome after the historic rigours of the week, the barriers had been broken down and many life-long friendships had been established.

Sadly, the economic crisis mean that this course (A307 Drama) is to be wound up this year due to the heavy financial burden of copyright renewal on television productions such as Jean Genet's *The Balcony* and *Six Characters in Search of an Author* by Luigi Pirandello, which are so much an integral part of the course.

And so to York. A very different week to the one in London. One reason and perhaps the most re-

levant was that the York campus is rural and wonderfully rustic. There are lakes and rivers and if you really want to, you can row from one seminar to the next. Venice with lecture rooms.

Ducks, moorhens and Canada geese rule the campus and a favourite occupation was to purloin rolls from the gourmet canteen (the only one I've come across, wake up Egon Ronay) and feed the ducks before breakfast. Nature feasting with the arts.

The week was jam-packed with social events including concerts, films and guest lectures. Two films in the programme were Bergman's version of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and *Coming Home* starring Jane Fonda.

A stunning jazz concert was one highlight which was relatively poorly attended because the band was billed under the innocuous title of "modern jazz". But I've rarely heard such fine performances of classics like *Mood Indigo*, *Every Time We Say Goodbye* and *Honky Tonk Train Blues*. The last two were especially relevant to some at the end of such a week. For me the action could only go down from there but the next night the renowned Gabriel Wolfe came along to give his "self portrait" of Dylan Thomas, in the Welshman's own words. We were taken down a magical road from "A letter to Pamela Hansford Johnson", "Sequences from childhood" to the poem *In October*, and the evergreen *Under Milk Wood*.

Perhaps one of the best known poems by Craig Raine, our next guest is *A Marlin Sends a Postcard Home*, a very different type of poet to those which we studied on in our daily seminars, such as W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound or Rainer Maria Rilke. Enlightening and passionate dissection of verse which prompted this unfortunate comment one breakfast time: "I am sick of these intellectual bother boys, who carve up a poem, boot it around the room, jump on it while it bleeds on the floor and then walk calmly off to the bar".

So how much did this cultural pilgrimage cost? Fees for a full course are £98 per session plus £75 for each summer school. When the OU began in 1970, the fee per unit course was £25. The massive difference was brought about by the recent 46 per cent rise prompted by the Government. A dwindling number of local authorities pay summer school fees and travel costs.

Mr Bill Brandon, Secretary of OUSA the students' association, which is at present campaigning for mandatory grants estimates that the total cost of taking an Open University degree in a period of up to eight years (one course or credit a year) amounts to £1,800. Many people are entitled to credit exemptions and graduates are entitled to the maximum of three credit exemptions. Two credits are allowed for a year's work at a summer school. Summer schools are obligatory, not for their social content but for their in-depth supplement to the high



Tutorials: a chance to work together

standard of course material. They provide the often unique opportunity to discuss course problems with staff tutors, counsellors and lecturers.

An insistence on high academic standards is probably the most important factor in the survival and success of the OU.

It counts not only in producing course texts, television and radio programmes of high academic quality but also in the aim that such materials should be prepared not just for other academics but also for students.

Summer schools play a major role in this task and many OU students feel that a week or two away from their environment brings all the loose ends of the course together.

The emphasis on a caring attitude towards students is a striking feature of the OU. The remoteness of personal contact with students could have meant that over the OU's first decade most of their needs were ignored, but in fact has led to an insistence on providing for the student that has shown the way to other universities.

Summer schools play a major role in this task and many OU students feel that a week or two away from their environment brings all the loose ends of the course together.

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Drop leaving age, says RE staff

by Bert Lodge

A call for the lowering of the school-leaving age to 14 was made last week by the Association of Christian Teachers.

The association also condemned use of the terms "global village" and "multi-cultural" in endorsed compulsory worship in schools, and denied the accusation that teaching Christianity was indoctrination.

In a submission to the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Science, the ACT, most of whose 2,000 members are teachers of religious education, said a significant number of pupils got "educationally lost" at the age of 14 - even if they remained physically present.

The school-leaving age in the past had been raised to soak up surplus labour. Many young people's education, including vocational preparation, had suffered as a result.

They may experience educational revival after leaving school and opportunities for re-entry should be available.

While appreciating that society was pluralistic in culture, religion and race, the association would like all involved in curriculum planning to remember that these are age-old characteristics of Britain.

"We warn curriculum planners against the intoxication with what they suppose is new wine. Recognizing that truth is conveyed by 'global village' and 'multi-cultural society' we would like to see such terms redeemed from their present stilted of being the silliest in common use."

There does seem to be general agreement that assembly - in which the school celebrates the highest that it knows, is of enduring value. The association says: "We therefore endorse the view of the free churches that compulsory attendance at worship is a valid concept and an appropriate practice as a contribution to the education of the whole person."

Christianity should be the main element in any RE syllabus, says the ACT. While welcoming the flexibility allowed by modern agreed syllabuses it is convinced that educational needs are not met nor is the truth communicated by "cranking syllabuses with every available religion or 'life stance' though worthy of respect by the British Humanist Association."

There are very few teachers with the ability to encapsulate the essential beliefs and environment of several world religions for meaningful transmission in the very limited time allocated to the subject.

Parents rebel against school bus charges

by Biddy Passmore

Hundreds of Suffolk schoolchildren face being turned off schoolbuses at the start of next term because their parents have refused to pay new charges. Others will simply be kept at home.

Suffolk County Council has imposed a termly charge of £17 for primary pupils who live less than two miles and secondary pupils who live less than three miles from their school. Beyond those distances, they will continue to travel free. The charge, which would raise about £60,000-70,000 in a full year, will not affect children qualifying for free meals and there will be an upper limit of charges for two children.

However, the parents, who used to pay nothing at all, have staged a rebellion. About 300 letters of protest have arrived at Suffolk's education offices. And only half of the 2,700 transport bills sent out last month have been paid, although the deadline has passed.

"We're still getting some money in and we're prepared to take it up to the beginning of term on September 8", said Mr John Parker, assistant education officer. "But it's quite a slow trickle."

The parents argue that former education committees gave them undertakings to provide free transport when their local village schools were closed. And at Capel St Mary, pocket of fierce resistance to the new charge, they say the journey to the nearest school at East Bergholt, which takes their children along the main London-Ipswich road, is too dangerous without a bus.

County accused of failing handicapped

by Diane Spencer

An Oxfordshire parents' pressure group has complained again to the Education Secretary that their education authority is still failing to provide adequate schooling for severely mentally handicapped 16 to 19-year-olds.

Last year, the Bishopwood Parents Action Group complained to Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, that the council was failing in its duty under the law to educate mentally handicapped children beyond 16. After this, the authority decided to open two further education units for the mentally handicapped instead of closing one down as they originally planned.

In a letter to Mr Carlisle, the group claims that the staffing levels in the units are inadequate so that pupils get only 15 hours' tuition a week.

"By its actions and in its reply to our complaints, Oxfordshire has indicated that it does not consider more severely handicapped children should have a full time programme of education," it says.

The letter points out that the 1970 Education Act gave all handicapped children a legal right to education as provided by the 1944 Education Act.

This is the county's second attempt to impose a transport charge for children living within the statutory walking distance. Last year, councillors tried to introduce a £15 termly charge but only a few parents paid up and the council, with an eye on the local elections, decided not to press ahead.

This year, however, the newly elected council is determined to stick to its guns. It passed a resolution in May saying that "no pay meant no ride".

The council is to set up a two-man panel to consider cases where the new charge might be waived, such as dangerous road conditions. But that will not start to meet until well into September, after the start of the new term. Officials are wondering what will happen until then.

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Public inquiry into school running call

A group of parents have called for a public inquiry into the running of a comprehensive school if county councillors refuse to allow their children to go to another in the neighbourhood.

The parents of six children have petitioned Wiltshire County Council for their children to be sent to Sheldon school instead of Hardenhuish in Chippenham. Both schools are on the same site.

The petition comes after 60 parents had asked for their children to go to Sheldon instead of Hardenhuish - and Mr John Hargreaves, the headmaster of Hardenhuish, had been suspended from his job and was then accepted as a candidate for early retirement at 51.

The parents have asked to know the reason for Mr Hargreaves' suspension.

Mr John Pickering, one of the parents, said that - of the original 60 parents who asked that their children should not go to Hardenhuish - 30 had now accepted that their children would go there and 24 had been offered places at Sheldon.

The county council said that there were no places left at Sheldon, and that the catchment area of the two schools had been changed so the resources of each could be used to the full.

On the question of Mr Hargreaves' suspension and subsequent early retirement, the county council refused to elaborate on a statement at the time which said that he had been suspended for "matters relating to the management of the school and not for misconduct or impropriety".

Bullying alleged at Avon school

Avon education officials are to investigate complaints of bullying by boy and girl pupils at Broadacre comprehensive school in Weston-super-Mare.

A spokesman for the Education Authority said that the first complaint had been made just after the end of the school term and was dealt with by the headmaster.

However, a second complaint had been made by a parent alleging that his daughter had been bullied by a boy at the school. This would be investigated by the education authority in conjunction with the headmaster if the parent contacted the local education authority.

features

A day of judgement

There has recently been a revival of interest in the writings of the Australian novelist Henry Handel Richardson. This extract from her novel *The Getting of Wisdom* centres on a dramatic moment in a young girl's life at a highly select Melbourne boarding school at the turn of the century.

You might regulate your outward habit to the last button of what you were expected to wear; you might conceal the tiny flaws and shuffle over the big improprieties in your home life, which were likely to damage your value in the eyes of your companions; you

might, in brief, march in the strictest order along the narrow road laid down for you by these young lawgivers, keeping perfect step and time with them: yet of what use were all your pains, if you could not marshal your thoughts and feelings – the very real part of you – in rank and file as well? ... if these persisted in escaping control? – Such was the question which, about this time, began to present itself to Laura's mind.

It first took form on the day Miss Blount, the secretary, popped her head in at the door and announced: "At half-past three, Class two to Number one."

Class two was taking a lesson in elocution: that is to say, Mr Repton, the visiting-master for this branch of study, was reading aloud, in a sonorous voice, a chapter of *Handy Andy*. He underlined his points heavily, and his hearers, like the self-conscious, emotionally shy young colonials they were, felt half amused by, half superior to the histrionic display. They lounged in easy, ungraceful postures while he read, reclining one against another, or sprawling forward over the desks, their heads on their arms. It was the first hour after dinner, when one's thoughts were sleepy and stupid, and Mr Repton was not a pattern disciplinarian; but the general abandonment of attitude had another ground as well. It had to do with the shape of the master's legs. These were the object of an enthusiastic admiration. They were generally admitted to be the handsomest in the school, and those girls were thought lucky who could get the best view of them beneath the desk. Moreover, the rumour ran that Mr Repton had once been an actor – his very curly hair no doubt lent weight to the report – and Class two was fond of picturing the comely limbs in the tights of a *Hamlet* or *Othello*.

On this particular day, however, the sudden, short snap of the secretary's announcement that, instead of dispersing at half-past three, the entire school was to reassemble, galvanized the class. Glances of mingled apprehension and excitement flew round; eyes telegraphed vigorous messages; and there was little attention left for well-shaped members, or for the antics of *Handy Andy* under his mother's bed.

But when the hour came, and all classes were moving in the same direction, verandahs and corridors one seething mass of girls, it was the excitement that prevailed. For any break was welcome in the uniformity of the days;

and the nervous tension now felt was no more disagreeable, at bottom, than was the pleasant trepidation experienced of old by those who went to be present at a hanging.

In the course of the past weeks a number of petty thefts had been committed. Day-scholars who left small sums of money in their jacket pockets would find, on returning to the cloak-rooms, that these had been pilfered. For a time, the losses were borne in silence, because of the reluctance inherent in young girls to making a fuss. But when shillings began to vanish in the same fashion, and once even half-a-crown was missing, it was recognized that the thing must be put a stop to; and one bolder than the rest, and with a stronger sense of public morality, lodged a complaint. Investigations were made, a trap was set, and the thief discovered. The school was not assembled to see justice done.

The great room was fuller even than at morning prayers; for then there was always an unpunctual minority. A crowd of girls who had not been able to find seats was massed together at the further end. As at prayers, visiting and resident teachers stood in a line, with their backs to the high windows; they were ranged in order of precedence, topped by Dr Pughson, who stood next Mr Strachey's desk. All alike wore blank, stern faces.

In one of the rows of desks for two – blackened, ink-scored, dusty desks, with eternally dry ink-wells – sat Laura and Tilly, behind them Inez and Bertha. The cheeks of the four were flushed. But, while the others only whispered and wondered, Laura was on the tiptoe of expectation. She could not get her breath properly, and her hands and feet were cold. Twisting her fingers, in and out, she moistened her lips with her tongue. When, oh, when would it begin?

These few foregoing minutes were the most trying of any. For when, in an ominous hush, Mr Strachey entered and strode to his desk, Laura suddenly grew calm, and could take note of everything that passed.

The Principal raised his hand, to enjoin a silence that was already absolute.

"Will Miss Johns stand up!"

At these words, spoken in a low, impressive tone, Bertha burst into tears and hid her face in her handkerchief. Hundreds of eyes sought the unhappy culprit as she rose, then to be cast down and remain glued to the floor.

The girl stood, pale and silly-looking, and stared at Mr Strachey much as a rabbit stares



Henry Handel Richardson in her younger days

at the snake that is about to eat it. She was very ugly girl of 14, with a pasty face, a lank hair that dangled to her shoulders, a mouth had fallen half open through fear, and she did not shut it all the time she was in view.

Laura could not take her eyes off the way they travelled, burning with curiosity, to Annie Johns to Mr Strachey, and back again to the miserable thief. When, after a introductory remarks on crime in general, the Principal passed on to the present case, he described it in detail, Laura was fascinated by his oratory, and gazed full at him. He made all live vividly before her; she hung on his lips, appreciating his points, the skillful way in which he worked up his climaxes. But she herself knew what it was to be poor – Annie Johns had been.

She understood what it would mean to be your tram-fare on a rainy morning – according to Mr Strachey this was the motor impulse of the thefts – because a lolly shop had snatched out its octopus arms after you. She could imagine, too, with a shiver, how easy it would be, the loss of the first pennies having remained undiscovered, to go on to the shop-bits, and from these to shillings. More particularly since the money had been taken, with

out exception, from pockets in which there was plenty. Not, Laura felt sure, in order to avoid detection, as Mr Strachey supposed, but because to those who had so much a few odd coins could not matter.

She wondered if everyone else agreed with him on this point. How did the teachers feel about it? – and she ran her eyes over the row, to learn their opinions from their faces. But these were as solid as ever. Only good old Chapman, she thought, looked a little sorry, and Miss Zielinski – yes, Miss Zielinski was crying! This discovery thrilled Laura – just as, at the play, the fact of one spectator being moved to tears intensifies his neighbour's enjoyment. But when Mr Strachey left the field of personal narration and went on to the moral aspects of the affair, Laura ceased to be gripped by him, and turned once to study the pale, dogged face of the accused, though she had to crane her neck to do it. Before such a stony mask as this, she was driven to imagine what must be going on behind it; and, while thus engrossed, she felt her arm angrily tweaked. It was Tilly.

"You are a beast to stare like that!"

"I'm not staring."

She turned her eyes away at once, more than half believing her own words; and then, for some seconds, she tried to do what was expected of her: to feel a decent unconcern. At her back, Bertha's purr crying went steadily on. What on earth did she cry for? She had certainly not heard a word Mr Strachey said. Laura fidgeted in her seat, and stole a side-glance at Tilly's profile. She could not, really, could not miss the last scene of all, when, in masterly fashion, the Principal was gathering the threads together. And so, feeling rather like "leaping Tom", she cautiously raised her eyes again, and this time managed to use them without turning her head.

All other eyes were still charitably lowered. Several girls were crying now, but without a sound. And, as the last, awful moments drew near, even Bertha was hushed, and of all the odd hundreds of throats not one dared to cough. Laura's heart began to palpitate, for she felt the approach of the final climax, Mr Strachey's periods growing ever slower and more massive.

When, after a burst of eloquence which, the child felt, would not have shamed a Bishop, the Principal drew himself up to his full height, and, with uplifted arm, thundered forth: "Herewith, Miss Annie Johns, I publicly expel

you from the school! Leave it, now, this moment, and never darken its doors again!" – when this happened, Laura was shot through by an ecstatic quiver, such as she had felt once only in her life before; and that was when a beautiful, golden-haired Hamlet, who had held a Ballarat theatre entranced for a whole evening, fell dead by Laertes's sword, to the rousing plaudits of the house. Breathing unevenly, she watched, lynx-eyed, every inch of Annie Johns's progress: watched her pick up her books, edge out of her seat and slide through the rows of desks; watched her walk to the door with short, jerky movements, mount the two steps that led to it, fumble with the handle, turn it, and vanish from sight; and when it was all over, and there was nothing more to see, she fell back in her seat with an audible sigh.

It was too late after this for the winding of the snaky line about the streets and parks of East Melbourne, which constituted the boarders' daily exercise. They were despatched to stretch their legs in the garden. Here, as they walked round lawns and tennis-courts, they discussed the main event of the afternoon, and were a little more vociferous than usual, in an attempt to shake of the remembrance of a very unpleasant half-hour.

"I bet you Sandy rather enjoyed kicking up that shindy."

"Did you see Puggy's boots again? Girls, he must take twelve!"

"And that old blubber of a Ziely's handkerchief! It was filthy. I told you yesterday I was sure she never washed her neck."

Bertha, whose tears had dried as rapidly as sea-spray, gave Laura a dig in the ribs. "What's up with you, old Tweedledum? You're as glum as a lubra."

"No, I'm not."

"It's my belief that Laura was sorry for that pig," threw in Tilly.

"Indeed I wasn't!" said Laura indignantly. "Sorry for a thief?"

"I tell you I wasn't!" – and this was true.

Among the divers feelings Laura had experienced that afternoon, pity had not been included. "If you want to be chums with such a mangy beast, you'd better go to school in a lock-up." "I don't know what my father'd say, if he knew I'd been in the same class as a pickpocket," said the daughter of a minister from Brisbane. "I guess he wouldn't have let me stop here a week."

Laura went one better. "My mother wouldn't have let me stop a day."

Those standing by laughed, and a girl from the Riverina said: "Oh, no, of course not!" in a tone that made Laura wince, and regret her readiness.

Before tea, she had to practise. The piano stood in an outside classroom, where no one could hear whether she was diligent or idle, and she soon gave up playing and went to the window. Here, having dusted the gritty sill with her petticoat, she leaned her chin on her two palms and stared out into the sun-baked garden. It was empty now, and very still. The streets that lay behind the high palings were deserted in the drowsy heat; the only sound to be heard was a gentle tinkling to vespers in the neighbouring Catholic Seminary. Leaning thus on her elbows, and balancing herself first on her heels, then on her toes, Laura went on, in desultory fashion, with the thoughts that had been set in motion during the afternoon. She wondered where Annie Johns was now, and what she was doing; wondered how she had faced her mother, and what her father had said to her. All the rest of them had gone back at once to their everyday life; Annie Johns alone was cut adrift. What would happen to her? Would she perhaps be turned out of the house? ... into the streets? – and Laura had a lively vision of the guilty creature, in rags and tatters, sinking along walls and sleeping under bridges, eternally moved on by a ruthless London policeman (her only knowledge of extreme destitution being derived from the woe of the tale of "Little Jo"). And to think that the beginning of it all had been the want of a trumpery tram-fare. How safe the other girls were! No wonder they could allow themselves to feel shocked and outraged; none of them knew what it was to have three-pence in your pocket. While she, Laura ...

Yes, and it must be this same incriminating acquaintance with poverty that made her feel differently about Annie Johns and what she had done. For her feelings had been different – there was no denying that. Did she now think back over the half-hour spent in Number one, and act honest Injun with herself, she had to admit that her companions' indignation and horrified aversion to the crime had not been hers, let alone their decent indifference towards the criminal. No, to be candid, she had been deeply interested in the whole affair, had even managed to extract an unseemly amount of entertainment from it. And that, of

course, should not have been. It was partly Mr Strachey's fault, for making it so dramatic; but none the less she genuinely despised herself, for having such a queer inside.

"Pig – pig – pig!" she muttered under her breath, and wrinkled her nose in a grimace.

The real reason of her pleasurable absorption, she supposed, that she had understood Annie Johns's motive better than anyone else. Well, she had had no business to understand – that was the long and the short of it: nice-minded girls found such a thing impossible, and turned incuriously away. And her companions had been quick to recognize her difference of attitude, or they would never have dared to accuse her of sympathy with the thief, or to doubt her chorusing assertion with a sneer. For them, the gap was not very wide between understanding and doing likewise. And they were certainly right. Oh! the last wish in the world she had was to range herself on the side of the sinner; she longed to see eye to eye with her comrades – if she had only known how to do it. For there was no saying where it might lead you, if you persisted in having odd and peculiar notions; you might even end by being wicked yourself. Let her take a lesson in time from Annie's fate. For, beginning perhaps with ideas that were no more unlike those of her schoolfellows than were Laura's own, Annie was now a branded thief and an outcast. And the child's feelings, as she stood at the window, were not very far removed from prayer. Had they found words, they would have taken the form of an entreaty that she might be preserved from having thoughts that were different from other people's; that she might be made to feel as she ought to feel, in a proper, ladylike way – and especially did she see a companion convicted of crime.

Below all this, in subconscious depths, a chord of fear seemed to have been struck in her as well – the fear of stony faces, drooped lids, and stretched, pointing fingers. For that night she started up, with a cry, from dreaming that not Annie Johns but she was being expelled; that an army of spear-like fingers was marching towards her, and that, try as she would, she could not get her limp, heavy legs to bear her to the schoolroom door.

And this dream often returned.

The Getting of Wisdom was recently published in paperback by Virago (£2.95). A hardback edition is also available from Heinemann.

First find your school

Since the Panorama programme on Faraday Comprehensive, schools have been wary of allowing TV crews inside. Jeremy Bugler reports on how the makers of a new series tackled this delicate problem.

I made the call from a public telephone box near Tooting Broadway, the juggernaut noise hammering in my ears. I asked tentatively if I could come to discuss some research I was doing for a television series on schools. The head hit the ball straight back: "Is that what

you really want to do, or do you want to come along to case the joint and see if you can film here?"

That reply from Chris Brantingham, head of a South London comprehensive, was in character, his way of cutting through the briars of polite approaches. It also caught the wariness that exists whenever television and education meet. Both sides of the camera, the filmmakers and the to-be-filmed, remember horrors past – the way that Ealing comprehensive was nudged by *Panorama*, and so on.

Tonight (August 21), television and the schools begin a further episode in this long and touchy relationship. The first programme in a six-part series on modern education called *Starting Out* goes out on London Weekend Television. From the highly partial viewpoint of the series' producer, I can say that the programmes give contemporary English education a more thorough analysis than television has ever attempted before. (Miss M. Rice-Davies: "He would, wouldn't he?")

The programmes are, at any rate, conceived as a radical look at schools in terms of what they do for both their pupils and society. Aside from that, I can at least explain how one television team approached a project. Possibly, this will increase understanding between schools and studios.

The LWT team got the target of a series on modern education in their sights early last autumn. The team includes as director Andrew Forrester, a man who gives it a certain solidity since he taught for eight years in Glasgow comprehensives. We had then four months to do the basic research before filming started in January.

Two main obstacles confronted us from the start. Both were fairly formidable. The first was simply: "What are we trying to say?" We progressed erratically towards some certainty about our theme. For a long time, we can about talking at length to teachers, parents, educationalists, and officials, major and minor, in local and central government. Then there was a gradual increase in defini-

tion. It started when someone said that we ought to look at schools in terms of what they do for "the consumers" – the children, parents and indeed society, including the economy. We shouldn't look at education as something in itself.

More clarity came when we decided the key question was "What is education for?" What skills and abilities should children have at the end of years of teaching? If they've been taught French, can they speak it? And so on. We finally felt certain we were on the right path when we came across a deliberately provocative essay by Peter Wilby in *Condition of English Schooling* (Penguin).

Wilby's provocations were: "The truth is that, for too long, the British have developed their best brains at the expense of their second and third-best brains"; and "The trouble with comprehensives is not that their academic standards are too low, but that they are too high ... Academic mastery is courted at the expense of practical competence".

Over the weeks, we emerged with an approach with two main planks. We believe that English education has been bedevilled by the characteristic that earlier stages in the educational process are controlled by later stages. Thus, much work in school is essentially controlled by the universities. And since only one in 10 pupils is going to go anywhere near a university, the justice and logic of this arrangement is obscure.

Secondly, we found that English education, even as administered in inner-city comprehensives, is still in love with the idea of scholarship, of knowledge for its own sake. It is biased against technical skill, practicality and competence.

Our final view in *Starting Out* is that English education has been personally unfulfilling for about three quarters of the children subjected to it, while at the same time it has made a disastrous economic contribution. The best brains have been turned towards pure study; the lesser brains have been made to know it. As for practical problems, the one we faced

was the business of finding schools in which to film. But at least we had the advantage of knowing broadly what we wanted to say before making those first calls to the school secretary.

When the phone rings and the school secretary shouts through that there's a problem from Middle England Television on the line, head teachers normally – but not invariably – divide. There are those who say "Right, we've been picked for a repeat taping of *Panorama*", and those who exclaim (improbably) "At last! My chance to spread to the benefit of my wisdom, fruit of years of experience".

So it was I found a head who would not even accept the first tentative telephone call, detaching his secretary to keep the line open. There was the head who invited us to film next week, and don't bother to return the call.

Starting Out was filmed in schools where teachers who had more complex responsibilities were all suspicious of television. We heads, both state and private, had to be briefed that they were not embarking on an enterprise that would hold them up in their work. (One head talked of knowing that all private schools were bolder in that they were moral from Radley and the BBC, people we have scoffed, but their willing list has been so long that it is not worth listing.)

Getting consent for filming was particularly arduous because we made it clear that the programmes were likely to be critical of the English way of education. The schools were to be an illustration of deep defects, not what you want to be an illustration of a new defect?

I think we got permission for filming because a few heads, like Chris Brantingham at Southfields, a well-run, tight-ship comprehensive in Wandsworth, became genuinely interested in our theme. They accepted our assurances that we would blame the system, not the individual schools. They appreciated the need for schools to explain themselves

the world beyond the playground fence.

Day to day, filming in schools is hard work. For one thing, the school timetable is implacable. Hardly has a director got a sequence started than the bell has gone and the class with it. Even harder to take account of was the wholly understandable way in which teaching and teachers changed when the camera was turning. This posed a particular problem for us, because we generally knew what we wanted to film before we turned up.

For example, research in one school had told us that Mr Blank's French class would be a perfect illustration of the formal, traditional way of teaching French with a heavy emphasis on grammar. A lesson spent observing the class confirmed this as a mere understatement. But when we turned up to film, what happened? Mr Blank is transformed into a paragon of Parisian loquacity and his class, normally to be heard stumbling over their acute accents, are conversing about modern technology.

Mr Blank and his class had got caught up in the excitement of being filmed. Some reaction is a counterpart to any camera crew. Few approaches to programme-making have been as fraudulent as that of the fly on the wall. On the one hand, it chickens out of the serious business of analysis; on the other, it presents artificiality as reality.

To my mind, even the most skilled of Roger Graef's *Space Beyond the Walls* featured people pretending that they didn't know they were being filmed.

Starting Out's approach, then, was to research thoroughly and then film specific features of modern education – for instance, the specialization which leads to many of the brighter pupils dropping craft subjects. We'd then film craft classes in both state and independent schools; and interview craft teachers if we could.

The final judgment on whether our approach and execution are justified belongs, of course, to the Crowd Beyond the Screen. Jeremy Bugler is the producer of *Starting Out*.



Filming an electronics class at Halesbury College: how far does the presence of the camera affect the lesson?

Simon Pavey

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Talkback

On the
tenth day...
Ben Collins
Mike Spencer

Every month at our school, one day is set aside for teachers and students to involve themselves in a different learning experience. Students are invited to select an activity or a lesson from choice of 60 to 80 options provided by staff.

The variety is considerable: a climbing trip to Wales with a biology teacher; a day long lesson in photography with a physics teacher; a visit to a local factory with a humanities teacher; a day of walking; a day of sport, etc. In the past three years, 280 different activities have been offered, combining old favourites, seasonal offerings and new ideas.

We call our activity day "Day Ten". What started off as a venture

in adding variety and excitement to the school routines is now a well established part of our curriculum. Today it continues to provide us with time and space needed for new ideas and new directions.

Despite all its differences from the routine school day, Day Ten is not seen as something separate from the curriculum. Trips to museums, galleries, or even outings to the Continent are easier to organize. Extra time completing projects in the technology area is all the more possible.

At the same time it allows for some diversification — a day in which to do something in greater depth, and with more involvement: for example, a day of community service working with old people or the handicapped, or maybe an "initiative day" involving geographical orientation work in the neighbourhood.

We have now initiated Week Ten, many students will spend the week completely away from the campus in other parts of the country or on the Continent. Others will be completely based on the campus and in the

community; others still will be based on the campus but will make excursions on a daily basis.

Transport and living costs for students have been met in many ways. Group sponsorship, individual saving schemes, fund-raising schemes and grants, all have helped the less well-off students achieve their goal of going on the activity of their choice.

In the dark days of January and February, staff and students dig into their resources for ideas and suggestions for the summer to come. The result is a handbook containing detailed information of over 60 different activities.

The handbook goes to each student's home, with a letter to parents. The organizing committee then works on permutations of choice patterns, to ensure that each student gets one of their three choices from the original range of options.

During the week itself the atmosphere on the campus is purposeful but relaxed, structured but informal. Small snags remain. The girl whose bicycle has broken, the boy who be-

comes ill, the broken wrist falling in the mud when seen from the side either — the co-ordinator being out of his seat when seeing an action "Dog Week" — the organ (the machine) hurling a 20 lb weight three metres, prior to total collapse, the determined rock-climber finally managed the summit and after falling nine times — slips the refuse to stand up inside their boots — raku pots that collapse — the great Stantbury Egg Race — "rock-runs" being placed in newly made pillars.

Most importantly, the final week of the academic year on a day up-stroke. Our chief regret is that there is insufficient time and energy to record and evaluate the week at the time. It lingers in memories a September as the wheels start again.

Ben Collins is key Tutor and Mike Spencer is in charge of Day Ten, Stantbury Campus, Milton Keynes.



find a better way of employing these intelligent young people? If they spend so much time travelling, travelling not schools and universities could be directing their curiosity? I believe many of these intelligent young people are seriously underchallenged and they reject the future challenge of industry because of impressions formed at the time.

Martin Wright teaches at Highgate School, London.

A waste of
talent?
Martin Wright

In October 1980, 90 young men and, for the first time, 23 young women entered Downing College, Cambridge. Among male freshmen, 69 per cent had taken a break of at least 10 months between school and university. For women, the number was 14, ie 61 per cent, according to a questionnaire sent to all freshmen.

The longer break was more popular among freshmen reading arts subjects and those coming from independent schools. The large proportion taking the longer break is against the 20-year trend, though this has varied widely from year to year during the last decade.

Most freshmen had undertaken paid employment in the gap between school and university, whether this was less than four or more than ten months. However, the numbers taking the shorter break tended to come from areas of high unemployment.

Most jobs were menial, with low skill content or intellectual challenge. Rarely did freshmen use the talent we

assume they possess. The sole function of work seems to have been economic, a source of finance for foreign travel.

Few freshmen undertook employment that might provide them with training or insight into any future role as graduate managers in industry. They worked as labourers in clerks, van drivers and, in one girl's case, as a packer of pickles in an Israeli factory — an experience she does not wish to repeat.

That only four freshmen had participated in trainee schemes partly reflects the scarcity of these schemes as well as the attitudes of school-leavers. More than 40 per cent of the natural science and engineering entry had only a slight acquaintance, if any, with industry. (Compare this with 80 per cent in the case of Churchill College.)

Two freshmen had undertaken social work, 3 per cent of those answering the questionnaire, and 12 per cent had done what they had done nothing between leaving school and entering university.

Some did work in areas related to their proposed course of study — natural scientists worked as laboratory technicians, lawyers as clerks in solicitors' offices. Half the 14 women who answered the questionnaire had done jobs in this category; of the 51 replies from men, 13 had worked in areas

related to their Tripos.

The most common skill acquired was that of bar person: seven men and four women. Five men had done a spell as teachers, nearly all unenthusiastically. Three freshmen had taken the opportunity to break a leg or be seriously ill.

The most intriguing reply was that of the freshman who claimed to be doing top secret government work; the most bizarre, the former public schoolboy employed as a part-time chicken slaughterer.

Sixteen of the men worked abroad, and another eleven travelled abroad during the break between school and university. Five women worked abroad and another two travelled. One young man had worked his way round Australia sleeping rough, and another had been on a pilgrimage to Spain.

The college seemed to have a number of former "Jackeroos" and hotel barmaids from the world's tourist centres, plus the occasional courier and long-distance lorry driver. Two men and a woman, 3 per cent, had undertaken courses of study abroad to improve their language skills, or knowledge of another country's culture.

If freshmen are encouraged to take a break between school and university of at least 10 months, cannot industry

Assimilating
the deaf
Graeme Kent

The main problem we had to face when the deaf children joined our primary school was how to integrate them into the life of the main school. There are 10 boys and girls in the partially hearing unit. Their ages range from three to nine, although some of the deaf children have stayed with us until they were twelve.

The unit is in a well-equipped mobile classroom, it was apparent that there would be no problems with the deaf children joining the unit. It was just a matter of ensuring that the unit children were fully involved in school activities.

At first they met the other children only at playtime and in the lunch hour. We had to ask the older boys and girls not to treat the deaf children as pets; insisting sweets and novelty word off — and the deaf children seemed to be regarded as equals in playground games.

Our main difficulty lay in getting the deaf children out of the unit and into the classroom. In order to hear their teacher, the boys and girls had to plug themselves into a central console, which gave the impression of a great spider squinting in the middle of its web.

Then we heard of the Phonics. This was a stereo hearing aid with a built-in FM receiver. Strapped to a child's chest, with connecting wires to the unit, it allowed our class-

rooms to hear the teacher's voice through a high-fidelity microphone hung round the teacher's neck.

The apparatus was not cheap — each ear cost more than £300 — but the advantages were so obvious that we decided to equip the unit with them. Raising the money for the equipment proved remarkably easy. Acustomed to the laborious hassle of school fund-raising, we had not appreciated how generous people are when it comes to helping the handicapped.

People we had never heard of provided support. Pubs had whirled, colleges organized rag-days, that there would be enough money for the unit. The Phonics had liberated our deaf children to a degree we had never dreamed possible. How were we to utilize this "new-found freedom"?

The mechanics of the operation seemed simple enough. The children would spend part of their time in the unit, receiving specialist attention, and more than go over to the classroom containing children of their own age.

Before we had introduced the Phonics, the boys and girls from the unit had joined their peers mainly for art, craft and PE subjects, which could be taught by demonstration and example. Now, with their increased mobility, it should be possible to expand their horizons.

Much depended upon the situation of the teachers, and here the school was fortunate. Although our class-

rooms were crowded, with more than 40 children in some, every teacher reacted with enthusiasm to the chance of helping the boys and girls from the unit.

There were teething problems of course. The deaf boys and girls, who hitherto had been taught in small groups, tended to be more advanced than most subjects than the children in the main class. Although the classes meant that the deaf children usually were placed in the most advanced sets, which marked them out.

For their part, the deaf children were at first shy of answering questions in front of the others — so much so that we wondered if the teachers' eyes were functioning properly. However, the unit soon talking freely and with no signs of embarrassment.

At first the deaf boys and girls were bewildered by the crowds of children around them, all working in related tasks. Accustomed to the almost instant attention of the unit teacher, they took time to realize that the class teachers had to divide their time among many, and that they would have to wait their turn.

Another problem, especially for the younger ones, was that the deaf children became very tired as the day progressed. They found it increasingly difficult to cope with the demands made upon them in our large and busy classes. Many of the children came from a long way away, some of them having last four days of school, lasting an hour.

To avoid the children becoming

too tired, we made it a policy to return all the boys and girls to the unit after play in the afternoon.

Gradually, dealing with each child individually, we were able to extend the amount of time spent by the boys and girls in the classroom. As a rule they spent part of the morning in the unit and a part of the afternoon in the classroom, returning to the unit for the last forty minutes.

The presence of two good athletes among the unit boys, both of whom played for the school football team, also helped to secure general acceptance for the deaf children. They were problems with referees, especially if the opposition chose to put an off-side trap involving a great deal of whistling by the official. Our two hearing-impaired forwards were inclined to play on obliviously.

Dispersing the unit children throughout the school for longer periods meant that the specialist teacher had to spend a corresponding amount of time in correcting activities and keeping track of each child's overall progress.

After three years of working at this point, establishing the New Jerusalem is something that has been tried often enough by now for it to be clear what simply will not work. Poetry alone will not do it: if William Blake could not release Albion, the lavish poems of Keats and Wordsworth certainly will not. Documents will not do it: certificated nationhood did not save Lithuania or the few streets in London to join the UN even a particularly good joke.

The cities are in flames, and town planners over the last 50 years have heaped the tinder. Tower blocks with thin walls and nowhere for children to play or hang washing, featureless and rotting slums saw away at the lives of the urban poor. Perhaps within this context the very subject of the competition was mistaken,

Hot-air
balloons

Victoria Neumark
argues that it is time
architectural
radicals came down
to earth

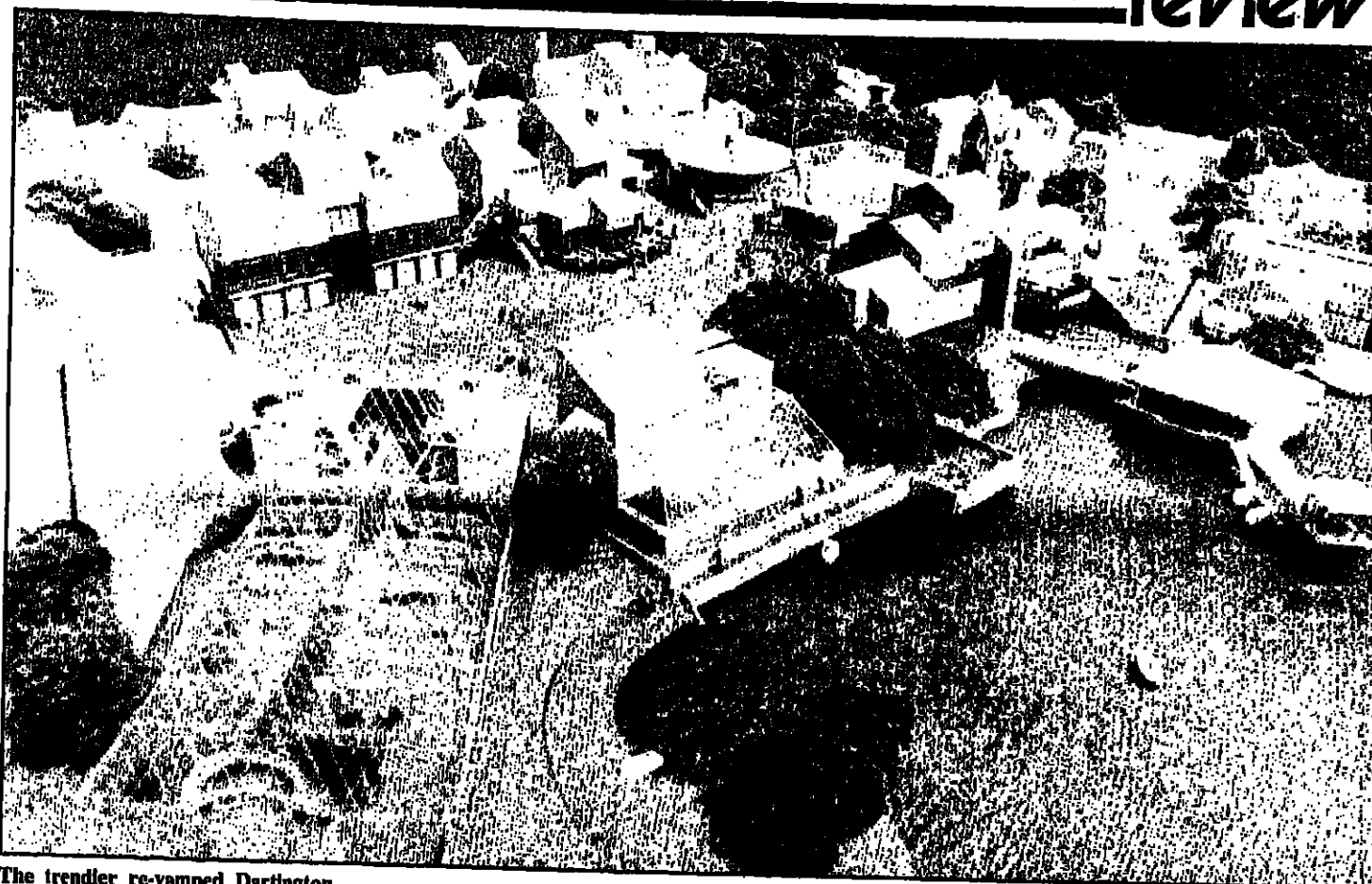
Walking round the winning exhibits from the Town and Country Planning Association's 1981 competition for "Tomorrow's New Community" at the Institute of Contemporary Art recently was to come in contact with more dizzying unreality than the Book of the Revelations of St John the Divine. Yet again, the wild inspiration of sixties' radicals could be seen disappearing up its own backyard with proposals whose coy fatuity will leave scarcely a modish tremor in the sands of time, let alone lay a brick.

Or so I hope. For the greater part of this exhibition was really an insult to the problems it set out to solve. Let me quote the prospectus for "Fourth World", a banner under whose seigns a variety of free-spirited communes apparently rejoice. "For these writers, it is no accident that from the twelfth to the nineteenth century, when the people of Germany were divided into dozens of tiny principalities... they were engaged in fewer wars than any other peoples of Europe."

Now, this is simply not true. Possibly the concatenation of strife which marked those years caused less damage per incident than nation-state wars do nowadays, but the Holy Roman Empire (since "Germany" only came into being in 1870) was renowned for the devastated misery in which wars forced many of its inhabitants to live.

I think it is not unduly pedantic to pick up on this point. Establishing the New Jerusalem is something that has been tried often enough by now for it to be clear what simply will not work. Poetry alone will not do it: if William Blake could not release Albion, the lavish poems of Keats and Wordsworth certainly will not. Documents will not do it: certificated nationhood did not save Lithuania or the few streets in London to join the UN even a particularly good joke.

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The trendier re-vamped Dartington

but if "tomorrow's new community" is not built on the basis of existing communities, its conception insults those who will, yet again, be left outside. Why were none of these prize-winning designers redesigning the sewers of Manchester, which need £60 million to last till the year 2000?

To return to the ICA: these considerations hold no sway with the carefree denizens of Christania and Friedrichshof — two happy Nordic communes where sunbathing naked provides an answer to everything, to judge from their snapshots. Or not quite everything. Friedrichshof is founded on more earnest intent: to be "an abbreviation for a new form of human society" and to promote "energetic living in general." This chiefly consists in "self expression" and breaking the "taboos of forbidden and embarrassing things" which, (surprise, surprise!) issues forth in free sexual union. However, the viewer of their tape-slide show, crouching uncomfortably on a bed (of course) was assured that this was no more license but the breaking of patriarchal role patterns. The women, it is emphasised, "get more lusty than the men." Still, it was always the women looking after the children in the slides.

Reich to the contrary, sexual liberation is not going to bring about a New Jerusalem, either. If the wonderful lunacy of the seventeenth century Ranters (and the earlier Brethren of the Free Spirit) sank without a trace under the advance of secular capitalism, it seems improbable that Friedrichshof's reasonably-priced programme of Goggi dance, role-playing and rhetoric courses is going to rock the boat now.

So to the English village. Greentown in Milton Keynes was there to provide an example of what just a couple of hundred people

almost like everyone else can do to design their own village. The visitor too could share in the experience by moving small wooden blocks around on a cardboard model to get the feeling. In the trendier, re-vamped Dartington (in the year 2000) a cafe-cum-pub will be open 24 hours a day, visitors will stay in the Inn as private space will be limited and all facilities provided communally (have you heard this before, O dwellers in tower blocks?); and the most amazingly versatile lake will provide recreation, food, water heat-store and tranquility.

As the prospectus for the Community Development Company of Merseyside (by Steve Moseley and David Morgan) pointed out, the first step is: "Acquire land."

Discarding the whimsy of the exhibit called "Walls" (a giddy proposal for communal anarchy in some unspecified green haven), and the self-horror of a model of "The City" whose prospectus is the demented gibberish of Californian light-bulb changers, there were three genuinely interesting entries.

The Community Development Company put forward an imaginative and inexpensive reconstruction for a depressed area near Liverpool. The proposals, for industry as well as community services, were in tune with what residents of such areas have themselves asked for in the past, though I don't know how many people would like their central heating controlled from a central microprocessor. Sheltered housing for the elderly and administration offices were welcome suggestions after the innumerable hot-air balloons which littered the skies of the other snug Utopias.

The overcrowding of written information on small drawings was the only flaw in Community Development Company's entry, a flaw linked with Harold Lane's "Organic Regional Planning for West Cumbria". If one could

fight back doubts about the disappearing countryside and a conviction that true town or country planning must go hand in hand with the organization of society, in whatever system, Lane's suggestions for the revitalization of a whole area by developing a satellite to an existing village would command praise.

The structure of tomorrow's new community is not only physical. Mr Lane makes use of new technology in building techniques and plans for every conservation, but he does not ignore the traditional life-patterns of his "dormitory workforce with an excellent work record". Arcaed Ltd, whose entry "Buffer Thinking" is more about energy conservation than about a community, offer a less plausible set of solutions.

Arcaed built the Clifton Nursery — a beautiful glass house in itself, but less pleasing as the prototype for a whole city. Houses, after all, have to be acceptable not only singly but en masse: a trip to Miami ought to convince anyone of that. And will people who live in glass houses be able to be alone? Depending as they do on complete rebuilding, Arcaed's suggestions are impracticable for any but the rich, amongst whom we cannot count the local authorities and homeowners of the inner cities. Moreover, people by and large do not want to be summarily re-housed: the fiascos of the fifties' estates ought to have demonstrated that. Still, "Buffer Thinking" was the most purely informative of all the exhibits.

The exhibition was not as pertinent a comment on "tomorrow's new community" or the "community with a human face" which TCPA's competition was about, as one comment in the visitors' book: "Why not" said the weary scrawl, "test tenants on council estates for psychological compatibility?"



"Beautiful" is, as Oppella's father noted, an all phrase, a vile phrase: The manufacturers of cosmetics are at pains to assure us that the wrinkles they recommend only serves, restores, beautifies and enriches Nature. New verbs are brooked merely to unveil — to tone, to firm, to condition, to contour, to highlight — the underlying radiance of the true You.

This message is most eloquently and cheaply conveyed by direct telling through a neighbourly voice: "the star of our demonstration"

whose excitement on receiving a "Full Moon" from a qualified beauty consultant will be enhanced by a Exclusive Gift, provided that three new volunteer-hostesses are recruited from among her guests.

Company advice in a handbook for novices embarking on a beautifying career — "Never forget: sell yourself. People buy people first" — strikes a delicate balance between the intimacy of housewives and the authority of science: alternately urging indulgence — "pamper yourself, treat yourself to a luxury you can't afford to be without", and insisting on discipline: "a regular C.R.P. routine (cleansing, refresh and protect) for the T-zone."

Customers must be "weaned off" soap and water in favour of dew-droxy moisturizers — "touch, test and try". "Every woman should use eye cream from the age of 20 every night". Remind them of elastic — how it stretches and sags, oily skin, "sallow, pale, dead-looking coarse, — can be likened to orange peel", needs a "pick-me-masque" to "clarify" the pores, while an emollient cream is designed to "plump out dehydrated cells."

The legal obligations of the Trade Descriptions Act compel copywriters to tread warily through the minefield of the epidermis. The product may be said to boost, revitalize, reactivate or rebalance, to "soften creppiness" or to "defeat signs of aging", but not to cure wrinkles or erase lines.

Promoters may safely boast of technological expertise — "the depths of research have been delved". They may recall the efficacy of the Madonna Lily "for embalming purposes in ancient times." They may transmute the hum-

drum familiarity of next door's front room by celebrating the exotic provenance of their ingredients: "bergamot from Sicily, cedar from Java; sandalwood from the Bhutan". Safest of all, they may promise deliverance from "the adverse effects of modern living", sympathy for the weary, replenishment for the drained. "Night creams put back what the day takes out." Preparations to straighten negroid hair are known as "relaxers", as if curls themselves

Relax, but don't let yourself go. Women have a duty to resist wear and tear. The body is represented as a crowd of deserving dependants who will, if neglected, turn against you and seek revenge. Be kind to your hands, your cheeks, your neck — or else.

Deep-cleansing — "to remove all traces of our increasingly polluted atmosphere" — is a crusade against "deep-down grime", a struggle to "throw off impurities" in your own small corner of other people's environment, a bid for salvation through spring-cleaning, an effort to groom away guilt.

In the gush of metaphor from the trade — "the well of knowledge for our consultants can constantly be drawn upon to give an overflowing fountain or understanding" — there rolls an inexhaustible cash flow, bubbling to the surface via the soul. Trainees buy instructions with their Beauty Pack, and learn to massage the market for deep-down penetration, leaning on fears and friendships in the certainty that most mothers can at a pinch be milked.

Marion Glastonbury

arts

Going down

John James at the London International Festival of Theatre

The London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT) has come to an end. A second week saw the opening of shows from Japan, Holland, France: it also gave a chance to catch up on the Peruvian presentation. From the Japanese University Tamagawa Gakuen came *Bekkanko* (An Ogre), a touching story of the love of a modest ogre (Bekkanko) for a badly treated blind girl (Yuki). With the aid of a goddess they marry. To make their happiness complete he obtains a herb to cure her blindness. Doing so, he is mortally wounded by Yuki's evil father. On his death Yuki is transformed into an ogress.

Performed by an all-male cast of eight actors with five musicians, it combines elements of Noh, Kabuki, Kyogen, traditional Japanese drama forms. The music contains modern influences and the narrative songs, so well sung by the four-man chorus - who also act as talking supers and masked property-men - add much to the show's great enjoyment. Two masked actors played the ogre and goddess; the father and Yuki are unmasked - until her thrilling metamorphosis. The Noh-Kabuki Establishment disapproved of Tamagawa's training amateurs in their closely-guarded traditional forms. But only the ignorant could mistake Tamagawa for its originals; only purists could complain. In its lack of polish, it lacks the hieratic mystery of the Noh, the technical precision and spectacle of the Kabuki. But it is wholly absorbing, combining naturalism with stylisation, and the drum-

choruses are especially thrilling: richly entertaining.

So is Holland's *Het Werkteater*'s narrative-revue of *Zus of Zo* (One of Them). By means of sketches and intertwined monologues four actors tell of male homosexual development in a homophobic society. Much of their material is improvised and based on fact. From humiliation at school, through parental distress, and breaking up, to a romantic reunion when aged lovers start again (the only novelistic note) we see the struggles, emptiness, pride and loneliness of being homosexual. The picture is partial, the prognosis stereotyped, but the pleasure of seeing good actors performing good material well disarms criticism. Excellent use is made of comedy and of movingly clear the flowering and destruction of pair-bonding. It is all done in English - no wonder the audience cheered!

Warm applause, too, for Luis Ramirez's one-man show *Caminitas* (E Insomnias (Wandering and Sleeplessness)) based on short poems describing his village's destruction by an earthquake in which his family and friends die. To playing flutes he adds dance, song, mime: there is a particularly graphic enactment of the bodies being thrown by the quake. It is an arduous performance, naive, sincere, deeply felt. The red-noses and constipation add nothing; gratuitous decoration. Of which there is

plenty in Glaces (Mirrors) from France. An exploration of the master/servant relationship, full of cut and mouse games, it is a two-hander in which "Every name of narrative has been erased... a move towards the imaginary, which allows the spectator to abandon all intellectual efforts towards interpretation": enough said.

However, more must be said of LIFT. The festival founders claim to have been "stunned by what they saw being achieved in European theatre festivals", to have "gathered in talents impressed and have done no such thing. Foolish to declare that LIFT is in no way a merit for the import of culture or of curiosities". What of Jentayu, Macmalina, Bekkanko, the Poles as cultural exotics? Or *Urfaust* and Glaces as curiosities? For all its grand promises LIFT has broken no new ground, presented no surprises, played to no less "specialist audiences" than those of the late-lamented Peter Dabney's excitingly innovative and influential World Theatre Seasons. For the most part the companies presented were not worthy of international exposure in one of the world's major theatre centres. So, why LIFT? Showing such low standards of choice themselves, it becomes the Theatre and denigrate previous international theatre sessions. They must set their sights higher for next year if LIFT is to be worthy of its name - let alone survive.

Culture in danger

Many delegates at the 24th World Congress of the International Society for Education through Art went to Rotterdam last week because early announcements, and the aftermath of the 23rd Congress three years ago in Adelaide, encouraged a belief that the Society really was interested at least in all the arts. Not so. Out of about a hundred special papers and lectures just over half (57) went to INSEA's traditional concerns with drawing, painting, sculpture, handicrafts and textile work. Much less than half (41) had to cover film and video, drama, music, dance, museum work, community arts, and so on. Philosophical and aesthetic interests. The results were inadequate for all. Three sessions touching drama, for example, made no impact collectively because they were unrelated, and uncoordinated, except in a common reference to the Congress theme "Arts Education: process and product". The one session on dance was a painfully inadequate presentation of recent Portuguese experience, so that all the new dance-in-education work observable today in Europe and North America went unre-

ported. None of the speeches and very few of the 30 specialists films touched on performance arts. Nor were there any demonstrations of drama, dance, or music work to match Congress's rich exhibition of schools art work from many countries.

Such confused direction and lack of coherent approach to today's pressing problems of the arts in schools could have serious consequences for INSEA because, as the Mayor of Rotterdam remarked, "the greatest danger to culture is a narrow approach to culture". Someone, therefore, may have to form the broad international body required today, leaving INSEA nowhere.

That this need not be so emerged strongly during the week encouraged by the flexibility of superb Dutch organization. Although only two of the seven keynote speakers - John Kerbs from West Germany - provided significant intellectual stimulus (Ivan Illich's opening lecture on the Congress theme was a conceptual

disaster), there were lively, challenging contributions in individual sessions, especially from younger European speakers, who contrasted with a disappointing lack of originality from the many US academics. Only Susan Rosenbaum from New Jersey helped to save the American reputation with a fine paper on the challenge of the performing arts to traditional curricula. Among good stuff from elsewhere, mostly quoting practical experience, was Rob Hoelien's paper on Dutch creativity centres, Jan van Oosten from Breda on Best from Swansea on creativity, Peter Blanker on a Dutch art project among young prisoners, and an electrifying lady from Brazil, Anna Mae Barbosa, who described the first conference for art teachers of all kinds in Brazil, a courageous act in the content of South America. All possibilities, then, are open to INSEA if it can close the gap between itself and what is actually happening in the classrooms of the world.

Peter Brinson

BFI debate

Sir. - The correct term to apply to Raymond Durgnat's "sketch" of the issues involved in cinema semiotics (June 25) is not so much "thumb-nail" as "pinhead". This eclectic account of 70 years of developments in linguistic, literary theory and film studies is woefully inadequate and wilfully chauvinist. In following the recent practice of passing off structuralism and linguistics (not to mention psychoanalysis and post-structuralism) as short-lived Paris fashions, he manages to miss out Sautere (Swiss), the Moscow Linguistic Circle (not Stalinist), the Frankfurt school and the writings of Jakobson, Eisenstein and Pagnol, to name but a few. Exactly what is the point of publishing such an inadequate version of a complex and long-standing debate?

The existence of a debate to which the two journals published by SEPT have made a contribution, is not something Mr. Durgnat readily admits. He fails to mention the huge amount of work on education pub-

lished by Screen and Screen Education, or the correspondence which followed Derek Malcolm's New Statesman and Lindsey Anderson's Guardian pieces. He merely neglects a few journalists who have (unfairly) French intellectualise, and now changed their minds, and that is the end of the argument. Mr Durgnat's ascription of a monolithic set of policies to SEPT and the BFI Education Department, makes one doubt his familiarity with the range of publications, materials and courses emerging from either. It exactly serves more than a half-page; if it is a manner of professing to despise Mr Durgnat, replace argument by a statement of positive and negative. Mr Durgnat has, in fact, been ruling the question of SEPT's public funding for some years, and this particular ally needs to be seen in the context of a row about BFI allocations of funds to grant-aided bodies, of which SEPT is one. This was the subject of correspondence in The

Guardian in Spring 1981. A "second" structuralist controversy is not so much "hotting-up" as being warmed over.

We would welcome a debate about film, TV and media studies in your pages, but that debate must be seriously and adequately expressed. The curricular implications of structuralism, for work, are important; recent teaching materials on sexism and racism will show (see Bob Ferguson on 1981). However, that debate, so important, why is it relegated to the lower half of a page whose entire purpose is to mislead? The director's name is mentioned once in the text, but in parentheses at that. Such funding for some years, and this particular ally needs to be seen in the context of a row about BFI allocations of funds to grant-aided bodies, of which SEPT is one. This was the subject of correspondence in The

Pop and puppets

Celebration Children's Festival
Churchill Theatre, Bromley.
10-22 August 1981

Good weather and a perfect location ensured the success of a two-week Children's Festival organized by the Churchill Theatre, Bromley. "the theatre in the park". A belated commemoration of the Royal wedding, the event brought together some of London's best specialist children's theatre groups.

Rock and baroque concertos sounded through the park from 10 a.m. each morning, entertaining enthusiastic young audiences as they moved from the Covent Garden Community Theatre's *Sausage Dog* on to *Mandarin Complex*, a 30-foot high inflatable brought by the Touring Theatre of Pneumatic Art, past escapologists, the Post Office's Stamp Bug and Zippo the Clown attempting to jump over the world's largest custard pie on his bike.

In Soap Box Theatre's *There's No Case Like Holmes*, the Great Detective and Dr Watson tangled with a pop singer called Lena Litter, songs, ban-

nas and gadgetry to predictably one effect.

With up to 20 separate events opening each day, the Festival, sponsored by Capital Radio and many firms, was the largest children's festival of the summer in London and the South East. Little if anything, however, non-stop puppet shows, puppet troupes and brass bands filled the theatre ground. Street Theatre Theatre Kit, Prof. Dogg's Troupe and Pumpkin Theatre were all there holding their own against the infectious eccentricity of Buskeround, a selection of "top London street musicians".

Centrepieces of the whole Festival were two shows on the Canal Theatre stage. *Colonel Chumley's Children's Show*, a two-hourly programme, played every morning of the first week. Ed Stewart and *Simple Fun Time Show* took over for the second. Slick and professional as they were, the real Festival was Zippo, Lena Litter and Covent Garden's gentle Vera - out in the park.

Hugh Davie



Poetry out of destruction: one of series of ceramics of ruined houses by Peter Bennett, a final year student at Middlesex Polytechnic

Pink champagne

"Woman lives but in her lord" wrote Dorothy Parker. Her terse and witty "General Review of the Sex Situation" was one of the 40 items packed into *The Pink*, and neatly summarised one of the principal themes of this long anthology of poetry and prose, last week at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith.

The programme was compiled and performed by three first-rate actresses - Anna Carter, Panny Viner and Sue Jones Davies - as a "celebratory experience of women's lives and thoughts". The celebration was, needless to say, scarcely a matter of streamers and party hats, focusing as it did on women as the double time as man's "Maintenance Engineer".

The selection of poetry underlined the immensely high standard of contemporary women's writing: not only Sylvia Plath, Stevie Smith and Kathleen Raine, but many lesser-known women were represented in verse. Their work was alternately bawdy, wistful, angry, humorous, violent. There did, though, seem to be a gap with no one yet "celebrated" the experience of working-class women in verse.

The poems were complemented by some equally well-chosen songs ranging from Elvis Costello's down-trodden "Shot with his own Gun" through Sondheim and Brecht/Brecht to a delicious send-up of the dreary, fifties hit, "Bobby's Girl". "He Just Don't Appeal to Me" also stood out, deftly putting women firmly in the ascendant of the sex war.

The three performers - with live piano, accompaniment and musical direction by Mill Geyser, and discreet support on drums from Doug Welding - sang, danced and upbraided. The cabaret-style format, with a minimum of props, (they included Fanny Viner's forthcoming child) was handled with style and imagination by director David Hovey.

Jonathan Croll

A summer's tale

Ann Fitzgerald at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's Summer School

"If you've only been coming for about five or six years you're still a newcomer", explained one of this year's members of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's Summer School, at Stratford on Avon.

It sums up the sort of loyalty which this annual event, now in its thirty-fourth year, has won from the public, attracting between 600 and 800 applications every year for the 250 places, and though many new faces always appear it's also common to find people returning with the regularity of migrant birds.

When the RST established the School in 1948 it was designed, "specifically as a course for teachers of English in schools", and its first director, John Garrett, was himself a teacher.

The pattern of the week's course, of morning lectures, afternoons free for study or recreation and evening visits to the theatre, has remained much the same but the changes in style and content over the years reflect the greater flexibility of teachers, their growing communication and interaction with other professions and activities in the world beyond the school gates and the widening of educational horizons which have taken place in the period since the war.

The present director of the School, Dr Stanley Wells, who took over the post 11 years ago, is a distinguished research scholar, Senior Research Fellow at Balliol College, Oxford, with a number of scholarly books and papers to his credit, but he's also at home in other allied worlds. He's head of the Shakespeare Department of Oxford University Press, a Governor and member of the Executive Council of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and a regular reviewer for the *TLS* and *Radio 4's* *Kaleidoscope*.

He admits that during his directorship he's deliberately shifted the emphasis to include a much greater theatre content so that there is a real fusion of academic and theatre elements, "whereas at one time it was very much based on academic subjects and speakers".

The opening of the RSC's studio theatre in Stratford in 1974 further widened the School's curriculum and in addition to Shakespeare productions at the main house lectures and visits now also include productions of classics at *The Other Place*. This year *A Winter's Tale* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are complemented by a rarely performed Restoration comedy, Farquhar's *Twin Rivals* and Tsoetsi's *A Doll's House*.

Along with scholarly papers from university professors and lecturers there are talks from actors, directors and other staff from the RSC. The actors forum, which has become an annual spot, offers members of the School a chance to put their questions to actors in the current production



Cheryl Campbell as Nora in "A Doll's House"

and the final morning's survey of the theatre's repertoire is given to a leading journalistic critic, Michael Billington of *The Guardian* this year, and for once the theatre gets the chance to answer back with a reply by one of the season's directors.

It all makes for a fascinating meeting of different viewpoints and skills, Shakespeare's works, for dramatic literature and the theatre in general, and there is the mental exhilaration of hearing earnest dedication to these subjects with the urbane wit of accomplished speakers.

Dr Wells picks his speakers carefully, realizing that "not all experts have the knack of putting across their material", and lively presentation has become something of a School hallmark, matching the intellectual and artistic calibre of the speakers. As one teacher mused gratefully, "we get a far higher ratio of good lecturing here than we ever did at University".

Other members of the group I spoke to included a mature student who had been persuaded to return to University partly as the result of a previous Summer School visit, two sixth formers who, on their own initiative had decided to "try it as a bit of an experiment", an accountant, an engineer, a chartered secretary and a research technician in a biology department. All were enthusiastic about the value and pleasure they were getting from the course, regarding it as a particularly stimulating form of

leisure-learning holiday, in the mellow setting of summertime Stratford on Avon.

The £16 registration fee gives admission to all lectures, a choice of theatre tickets at various prices, temporary membership of Hall's Croft Festival Club with its lounge, restaurant, reading room and garden and access to the libraries of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

Teachers still make up approximately sixty per cent of the School's participants and like plants soaking up a refreshing shower of summer rain, they seemed grateful to be back on the learning side of the fence again after a year's giving out of knowledge and ideas in their jobs. Comments included: "It's such a pleasure to see and discuss some of the plays that are not set book favourites", "the treatment of the plays by actors and directors makes the text seem more open-ended", and "there's food for thought all the time".

But the point which provoked the most heartfelt agreement all round was, "don't say too much about it in your article or we shall find it harder than ever to get in next year".

Advance information about the RST Summer School is available to members of the Mailing List, subscription £3p a year, to Mailing List Organizers, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford on Avon, Warwick. CV37 6BB.

Farmers, shepherds and corn dollies

The Goliards of Chagford, Devon, take their name from the medieval songsters who romped the lanes of Chaucer's England singing their ballads, both lewd and profane. For the last 14 years the Goliards have staged outdoor plays in the romantic setting of an Elizabethan courtyard, at Shalstone, the home of the long suffering Mr and Mrs Jo Jory. Productions range from *Plautus to Cold Comfort Farm*; tours have stretched as far as Normandy. But it is in Chagford and the countryside surrounding it that the company moves and lives. Farmers, shepherds, students and tradesmen with a sprinkling of professional actors, the format and casting something in common with the medieval mystery cycles.

During a fortnight of intense activity, with hymn-like either completed or suspended, producer Mary Mor-

ton, "Arch-Goliard", moulds her motley crew into shape; heading at the same time an army of seamstresses, whose job it is to manufacture Byzantine cloaks and headpieces for bears played appropriately by an agricultural correspondent. Goliard Weather is a local byword for the freak summer sunshine that bothers that corner of Devon in late July and August.

More than anything else the Goliards exude a genuine freshness and life. Children and animals - those banes of any professional actor's existence - are as much a part of the Goliard style as eating, drinking and rousing song. Second generations of Goliards dance the dances like the offering of Breughel. Instead of this year saw a bundle of blankets, this year saw a real live *Winter's Tale* Perdita, all of six weeks old. As for the animals,

horses, dogs and Audrey's goats have trod the boards. This year was the turn of Mistry, a five month Scotty Ram who was found on the Moor and whose festival bleating punctuated the sheep shearing in Bohemia.

Regeneration and the healing hand of time - so often relegated to all-purpose rustic accents and a quantity of hastily assembled corn dollies - require very little of the actor's art, so manifest are they. With the year "growing ancient, not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth of trembling winter", shepherds stand disconsolate the time and testing of real life sheep dipping, lambing and shearing. There may be more theatrical shows of the passion and poison of Leontes' court, but none I think come closer to the spirit of concord that resolves the play.

Peter Fanning

Theatre of fantasy

Ceri Sherlock at the Dubrovnik Festival

"I.O.U. - Mytholmroyd, Great Britain. Dubrovacki dani mladog teatre", read a scratched blackboard notice outside the sun washed stone heights of Fort Revelin upon the medieval wall that encircles the "real" city of Dubrovnik.

"From Hell, Hull and Halifax, Good Lord deliver us", continued the chalk hieroglyphs - curiouser and curiouser, as the Cat would say! Yet catousier still was the discovery (within earshot of the sparkling sound of Ashton's on - Mersey Youth Showband's rendition of *Rule Britannia*) of a couple of bees riding a bicycle (bee-cyclette?), a magnificent larger than life kingfisher's head worn by a girl, a giant nose with matching winking eyes, a duck, a human dog and Absalom. An almost surrealist atmosphere that well betrays not only the essence of the highly original theatrical spectacle by I.O.U., but also the flavour of the city of Dubrovnik during the splendid festival (now in its 32nd year), from July 10 to August 25.

Coming from Mytholmroyd, Yorkshire, this nucleus of three fine artists and three musicians created a visual and aural scenario which was utterly unique, and undoubtedly a fitting British contribution to the Festival's internationally famous stage for young creative theatre companies. This year there were also groups from the USA, Barcelona, Paris, Novi Sad, Maribor and Dubrovnik itself. I.O.U.'s haze seemed to take as its focus a hazy and deliberately indistinguishable adaptation of "When Absalom was slain", and moved from tableaux to visual image evoking as many meanings as the audience could find: Absalom dousing his literary efforts into a pail and then hanging them, up to dry with the thousand others backstage on washing lines; a mobile thickset that emerges as a woman who transforms herself into a kingfisher to decoy a duck; a hyper intelligent dog and a band of musicians on truncheoned stile, engage in their own personal drama exploring the resonant acoustic of the building using implements from a bowed stretched piano wire to a plastic crumhorn, bought in Croydon. Their highly coloured faces and paint-daubed attire evoke a world of myth where tenuous links with the human situation are connected by the watches, for these ideas are intentionally obtuse and can mean anything, nothing or everything. The choice is ours.

This "open-ended" theatre (which was a special last minute creation for the festival due to the change of venue from the harbour to the traditional stage in the Fort), centred on the image of a vagrant writer who plops about in a world of his own scribbling on bits of paper. This is Absalom, presumably, for there is no text per se apart from two songs and a series of Beckett-like sentences, scrawled on the parchment curtains which Absalom utters before he rips them down. It is he, too, who inaugurates the almost absurd sequence of events by piercing a flashlamp's feeble yellow ray through the opening stage darkness. Later he draws the work into its tightest and most coherent section when he enacts a hunting scenario. Absalom is suitably dressed by his faithful dog and goes-a-hunting whereupon he fires a shot at a duck but accidentally hands the kingfisher instead who is captured with great reluctance by the dog. The extraordinary sight gives poor Absalom heart failure and is laid for dead beneath a huge edifice of a nose and blinking eyes, only to be revived by a troupe of stomping musicians troubadour-like tramping the stage.

To the strains of the lament in his honour "When Absalom was slain" see his head red - he gains new vigour and places freshly cut weeds in a pot on the table. While Absalom rests in the "eyes-house", a pair of bees circumscribe the tempting flowers on bicycles. They fetch their babies and feed them, to the strains of what sound like a Renaissance lullaby, with honey and pollen until its time to return to sleep off in their hive.

Now the dopey Absalom becomes a dizzy "baddy", dons a chicken wire bee hat and proceeds to smoke out the defenceless bees who tumble to the ground asphyxiated. Absalom nabs their honey pot and withdraws. The bees, simply furious by this action, draw their long stick stings, sharpen them and pierce the "nose house". Absalom retaliates armed with two fly swatters and attacks the fleeing bees. Heavy artillery is called for and the bees renew their attack with a canon that falls Absalom like a limp Goliath, his head peering through the table top which he used to defend himself. Triumphant, the bees once again sharpen stings and nonchalantly torment the exposed head jabbing it with pride and revenge. Thus the haunting and immensely evocative image of this twitching head swathed in red ribbons, used by the bees to dance a macabre maypole rite, remains, squirming as the light dies. Whatever one makes of it, this was excellent theatre and a striking piece not least for the way that music is integral to the total impact and constitutes a drama on its own plane - the cosmic, strangely unknown, uncomfortable and yet familiarly consoling. An integration that denotes I.O.U.'s hallmark, searching the combined arts to achieve a "total drama", wholly involving and most entertaining. They next play in Liverpool, this Autumn, where the theatre of fantasy and communal exploration cannot be anything but necessary.

Ceri Sherlock

them through time. Whilst it is truly said that these books will be invaluable to sixth form and undergraduate students of biology and geology, the general reader should not be deterred on first looking through them. Behind the very "technical" appearance of the individual contributions and the necessarily specialized vocabulary is some very fascinating and thought-provoking reading which is well worth the effort involved.

R. C. Vernon

Impressions of Paris seen through the eyes of its painters

This delightful 25-minute film captures the charm and beauty of romantic Paris through the eyes of its painters. It contrasts the City as it was, on the canvases of its artists, and as it is today, in photographs that show the essential character. Available from loan to bona fide schools and organizations.

TIME OFF LIMITED
24 Chester Close, London, SW1.
Tel. 01-235 8070.

books

A constant need for reassurance

Gillian Peele on recent trends in American politics

Walter Lippmann and the American Century. By Ronald Steel. Bodley Head £8.95. 0 370 30376 8.
Counting Our Blessings: Reflections on the Future of America. By Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Secker and Warburg £7.95. 436 29401 X.
Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties. By Harris Wofford. Faber £9.50. 0 374 22432 3.

The American political tradition has many dimensions. There is the lofty constitutional theory of the Founding Fathers, the moral passion of men like Lincoln and Wilson and the tawdry reality of day-to-day politics of Tammany Hall and Watergate. As the three books under review reveal in their different ways, the student of the world's greatest democracy has to appreciate all its aspects. Exclusive concentration on the corrupt and ruthless element of American politics would be as misleading as would an uncritical belief in American democratic rhetoric.

Ronald Steel's biography of Walter Lippmann depicts the long saga of a journalist whose knowledge of the contrasting dimensions of American political life in the twentieth century was unrivalled. Working

with Lincoln Steffens at *Everybody's* magazine, Lippmann saw the reforming zeal of the Progressive movement and the solidity of the power base of the bosses of Tammany, as one of Colonel House's assistants in the preparations for the Paris Peace Conference, Lippmann saw the conjunction of crusading virtue and self-interest in the administration's approach to Versailles; and as an increasingly intimate associate of occupants of the Oval Office he saw how flawed were the men elected to lead America.

One of Lippmann's characteristics was the need for a hero; but every president from Theodore Roosevelt onwards disillusioned him about their capacity to provide leadership. The most traumatic experience was perhaps when Lyndon Johnson's Vietnam policy caused Lippmann to abandon the role of an insider and become an ally of the administration's radical critics. The cycle of course, say that to make common cause with the left over this issue was to join the new establishment, but it seems clear from Steel's account that Vietnam caused Lippmann to reassess his whole view of the United States' international role.

The tension between America's liberal traditions and the imperial temptation had, it seemed, been resolved in favour of imperialism. A

vision of the American past had to be jettisoned, and, although Lippmann had changed his opinions on international issues before, the need to reassess the course of post-war American diplomacy must have been peculiarly painful.

The Vietnam question also illustrated the tension in the role of the American journalist. As Lippmann noted, there were "certain rules of hygiene" in the relationship between a newspaper correspondent and high officials to protect both the politician and the journalist. Lippmann, however, did not always obey those rules since he wanted to be more than a reporter and was a substantial influence on policy-makers. In return, presidents naturally expected support for their policies, and turned vicious when they were refused it.

Anyone who wishes to understand the power of the modern American media should start by reading Mr Steel's excellent book.

Senator Moynihan's collection of essays is in a sense a celebration of the variety and tension of the American political tradition. Vietnam, for Moynihan, is less a question of moral guilt or innocence than an object lesson in the difficulties of taking decisions in the international arena. Moynihan is against the hypocrisy which enables dictatorships to make the United States ashamed of its

position in the world instead of being proud of its contribution to human rights and democratic values. Not for Moynihan the effete "neo-conservative" philosophy is important with those who doubt the superiority of the American way. The interest of these essays is not, however, confined to the senator's thoughts on international matters - though there is a very useful essay on Salt at the end of the book. Rather the collection is important because it is the voice of a very important section of contemporary America - the morally conservative, politically moderate middle classes. One theme which dominates the essays is the importance of religion, of private education and of ethnic roots. In the 1960's the fight for tuition tax credits would have been seen as a piece of self-indulgence by a reactionary religious minority; in the 1980's it is a major political issue in an America which simultaneously lost faith in the public schools and in the secular liberalism which saw them as instruments for reforming society.

Wofford's book captures the ambiguity of the 1960's and its political mythology. As a special assistant for human rights in the Kennedy administration, he shared in the attempt to aid the under-

privileged in America. The innocence and political romanticism of the decade is revealed in Wofford's description of the struggle against segregation and the realization at the end of the decade of the brutality of the Chicago police. But Wofford is also aware that the central actors in his drama - the Kennedys - were in from being the noble idealists of the Kennedy myth suggests. Wofford notes how John Kennedy's intellectual style disconcerted those who were not "amusing" and denigrated those who could not play the clan's handball politics. That such a style led to the Bay of Pigs and Vietnam has hardly punctured the myth. Moreover, as Wofford also notes, Robert Kennedy wanted to close the investigation of his brother's killing to prevent publicity being given to the former president's unsavoury Mafia connections and to the C.I.A.'s plot to assassinate Castro.

Why has the Kennedy legend survived despite what Lippmann saw as a fumbling foreign policy and domestic paralysis? Lippmann himself thought it was because Kennedy was "a herald of better times in dangerous and difficult times." These books are striking testimony to the American need for constant reassurance that the good times and the good news will continue to roll.

Carrie on screaming

Stephen King's *Danse Macabre*. By Stephen King. Macdonald £8.95. 0 354 04646 2. £5.95 04647 0.

It has never been clear quite how we should take Stephen King. His hugely successful novels - *Carrie*, *The Shining*, *Salem's Lot* and now *Pet Sematary* - each combine a curiously dogmatic documentary realism with a pretentious and "literary" portrayal of abnormal psychology, while at the same time a wry dismissiveness undermines the horror, suggesting that King may indeed be pulling us on. Like film-maker John Carpenter, King is a deft manipulator of his audience; his books tease and taunt our innate fears, never confirming their reality, never denying their existence.

Stephen King's *Danse Macabre* (the possessive form is fashionably intended) is the horror writer's homage to his genre. Part autobiography, part analysis, the book connects King's own practice to the horror novels and films of the past 30 years. What links all of these, or King's selection from them, is a cathartic relief, close to laughter, as we face down our fears; this is true even at the extremes of H.P. Lovecraft, Carpenter's *Halloween*, Hooper's *Texes Chainsaw Massacre*, where laughter is, quite consciously, part of the horror. In the era of Trublinka, Manson's "Helter Skelter", the "White Night" at Jonestown, horror and sf movies build psychic bulwarks which compress and contain the whole process of alienation, always ending with the comforting news that the "monster" is "over".

The alternative is stressed too, of course, as in the question-mark *THE END* credit to *The Thing*; and *The Blob*, two of King's favourites.

The "universe" King generates in *Danse Macabre* steps from a simple stylistic idiosyncrasy. He writes about "disestablishment and disintegration", "the set of reality", our "phobic pressure points" but instantly highlights the pomposity of much of this with expressions like "kicking back", "what's a bummer", "apeshit". There is little consistency of argument or tone. Lee Oswald becomes

Connoisseur of unreason, champion of the instinctual

The Magic Toyshop. By Angela Carter. Virago £2.50. 0 86068 190 4.
Heroes and Villains. By Angela Carter. King Penguin £1.95. 00 56521.
The Bloody Chamber. By Angela Carter. King Penguin £1.95. 005404 9.

One of Angela Carter's books of short stories is called *Fireworks*, and it is her brilliant style that one reacts to first, the glossy effortless surface of her prose, the style like vaseline.

Three new Angela Carter paperbacks is almost a glut. From Virago comes *The Magic Toyshop* which won the John Llewellyn Rhys prize in 1967, while Penguin offers another early novel, *Heroes and Villains*, originally published in 1969, and her latest book of short stories, *The Bloody Chamber* (1979). They should be consumed with plenty of bread and butter in between.

The Magic Toyshop is the most uncertain of these fantasies, and the least fantastic. The rules of reality are never really broken in fact, though throughout the book the expectation that something peculiar is about to happen is continually excited. This is a story of three orphaned children, adolescent Melanie and her younger brother and sister, who are cast on the charity of unknown relations. Uncle Philip is a gross, mean, brutish figure who rules his household like a grim patriarch. ("His voice was thick and coarse, like peasant salami.") His wife, Aunt Margaret, was struck dumb on the day of her marriage to him. All of this is good Starkadder stuff, and the setting is promising too, an old-fashioned toyshop where Uncle Philip, in his basement workshop, carves ingenious toys for the shop by day, and by night crafts the lifelike puppets through which he can act out his fantasies. He is the Beast to Melanie's Beauty, and it is the tension in Melanie, poised on the edge of sexual experience, that chiefly sustains the novel. Two other characters, Aunt Margaret's enigmatic Irish

brothers, complete the hermetic family circle. The thunderous mood in the house, which occasionally erupts into violence or hysteria, is skillfully sustained, but by the end of the book the rabbit has still not been pulled out of the hat, the anticipated tricks remain unperformed.

Heroes and Villains takes place in a Bosch landscape, a post-nuclear world where the population is divided into settled communities ruled by soldiers and professors, and bands of marauding Barbarians. And there are the Out People, a series of grotesque variations on the human form.

Marianne, a Professor's daughter, bored with the predictable life of the compound, helps a Barbarian who has escaped death in a raid, and is carried off, more or less willingly, to share the dirty chaotic communal life of his tribe. Beauty and the Beast again, but Marianne is a spiteful, arrogant Beauty and Jewel, her captor, violator and eventual bridegroom is a melancholy Beast. Gradually the hostile attraction between them begins to mutate into something like love, but that is an irrelevance in their devastated world. Fear, unreason, superstition, violence and passion hold the tribe together, and they are all more legitimate responses to the horror of the world after the holocaust than the stately intellectual efficiency of the Professors' compounds.

Angela Carter is a connoisseur of unreason, an intellectual champion of the instinctual. Before she published *The Bloody Chamber* she had translated a book of Perrault's fairy stories. "Each century tends to create or recreate fairy tales after its own taste" she wrote in the foreword to that book, and *The Bloody Chamber* is her attempt to rewrite several of the old tales for the century of Freud. This is Perrault with a twist of lemon.

The story type that is sometimes called the "animal bridegroom" provides the main theme of the book; even Red Riding Hood reveals an unconscious passion for the Wolf. The tour de force of the collection is the title story, a retelling of Bluebeard. This is the story that

most overtly expresses the dangers of sexual feeling and the violent possibilities of passion. In the original story, moreover, that violence is fully acted out, in a way that hardly needs Angela Carter's more explicit retelling. Bluebeard is a Ripper and a woman-hater; but the horror lies in the act that his victims are aroused as well as repelled by him. Angela Carter gives this story of brutish passion a setting of glittering elegance: the husband is an international financier (and a collector of erotica), the ingenue heroine a student at the Paris Conservatoire.

The Freudian reading of the "animal bridegroom" type of fairy tale is that it shows that sexual feelings are experienced as repugnant and frightening until the point in life when a suitable love partner appears, when they are experienced as beautiful. Then love transforms the beastly into its own image, the spell is broken. But Angela Carter's collection contains two versions of *Beauty and the Beast*. In the first the story has its conventional form. In the second it is not the Beast that undergoes a metamorphosis, but the Beauty. The story called *The Tiger's Bride* ends: "And each stroke of his tongue ripped off skin after successive skin, all the skins of a life in the world, and left behind a naked patina of shining hairs. My earrings turned back to water and trickled down my shoulders; I shrugged the drops off my beautiful fur."

Angela Carter's beasts are far from beastly, and in this story as in several others there is some fear but more masochistic pleasure in the idea of a surrender to a savage partner. It is unquestionably this ambivalence that gives these versions their erotic tension. Yet the heroines are generally only temporarily submerged. They are survivors. Melanie, at the end of *The Magic Toyshop* and Marianne in the last scene of *Heroes and Villains*, are left shaken, but well in control of their futures. And Bluebeard's widow, having given most of her wealth away to various charities, reserves enough to open a little music school, on the outskirts of Paris.

Myra Barrs



Odysseus being questioned by the Sphinx: one of the illustrations to a new pictorial edition of Robert Graves's *Greek Myths* (Cassell £9.95). This edition includes the main part of the author's original text, but without any of the critical apparatus.

Children's Literature

The Biblical revival

Introducing the Bible. By Gerald Hughes and Stephen Travis. 0 85648 162 9.
The World of the First Christians. By Edwin Yamauchi. 0 85648 163 7.
The Lion Children's Bible. By Pat Alexander. Lion Publishing £4.95. 0 85648 288 9.

Whatever may or may not be happening in the churches, the Biblical revival continues unabated in the publishing houses, and nowhere more fervently than in those publishing for the children's market. Many of the recent spate of illustrated paraphrases show few signs of proper editorial control of writer or artist and have presumably been put together on the principle that the Bible always has been and always will be a bestseller, so one does not really need to worry about the contents.

There have been some notable exceptions - genuine children's Bibles which take account of reading ages, which do not assume knowledge of Hebrew culture, history and geography, and with illustrations that show signs of research and attention to detail. Into this latter group go these three new books from Lion Publishing, all of which make for genuine understanding of the Bible. *Introducing the Bible* and *The World of the First Christians* are both admirable background information books. The first is a summary of the Bible and also a commentary on it; the main text being interrupted by a number of features on such topics as daily life in Egypt, Jewish festivals and taxation in Judea. Three quarters of the book is concerned with the Old Testament and concentrates on Hebrew history, but attention is paid to the teaching of the prophets and to books such as Job and Ecclesiastes.

For a younger age group, the *Lion Children's Bible* is a straight-forward retelling of the main Biblical narrative from a refreshingly unconfusing and non-fundamentalist account of the creation up to the imprisonment of St. Paul. The illustrations are plentiful and colourful, though the quality is to say the least variable. Egypt is plagued by frogs the size of large boulders, David herds a flock of what might just be labradors and at rather odd angles. That apart it is still to be welcomed, not least because it is of a size and weight that allow a young child to hold and read it comfortably. It is also available as the *Puffin Children's Bible*, a paperback selling at £2.50.

David Self

It is designed to make a greater, more, extensive work available to those who want to own it, but its price will still ensure that most students will have to consult it in libraries. The *Shorter New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, edited by George Watson (CUP £40.00, 0 521 22600 7) is a volume abstract of a work which keeps its primary sections intact (the canon of authors' work) and which reduces its secondary sections to a few major works of biography and criticism. It is thus still possible to discover everything that any given author wrote as well as the most important material written about him. The sections on twentieth-century writers may be a little stuffy - the selections seem depressingly dated - but as a historical compendium beginning in the seventh century this work remains uniquely useful.



Cowboy attempts to gain information from a Vietcong prisoner - a still from "Go Tell The Spartans", one of the films discussed in Gilbert Adair's book "Hollywood's Vietnam: From The Green Berets to Apocalypse Now" (Proteus Books £7.95). Nearly 70 films are discussed, all directly or indirectly motivated by the Vietnam War.

The late G. S. Fraser

A Short History of English Poetry. By G. S. Fraser. Open Books £5.95.

The late G. S. Fraser made a name for himself as a poetry critic and one of the leaders of the now almost forgotten "school" of "movement" called "The New Apocalypse", a forerunner of the many, not to say innumerable, postwar "movements" that were to succeed it. Later he became Reader in English at Leeds University, a distinguished and much-loved teacher. One fruit of this career has been this excellent but alas posthumous, treatise on English poetry from Beowulf to the winner of last year's £5,000 Arvon Foundation poetry prize (a coincidence typical of his fate as a night-speller). It was completed, but not fully revised, before his death early in 1980.

Like all his critical writings this is an idiosyncratic, autobiographical, and readable book. Wonderfully free of the pretensions academic jargon that blights most literary criticism, these days. Early in the book he says,

"The purpose of a primer of English poetry like this is to give readers the flavour of the first impact of poets such as one felt oneself on one's first readings of them, not to provide a catalogue of dates and titles." It is a tall order - and there are a few poets whose true impact is not to be felt till the third or even the fifteenth reading - but one that the book fulfils quite remarkably.

There is no question but that Fraser was widely and deeply read, particularly in medieval, Renaissance, and, naturally for a Scotsman, Scots poetry. His brief history is illustrated with well-chosen quotations, often whole poems, from the authors he discusses; many of them well-known but some of the poems are unfamiliar enough to make the discovery. Thus the book is in effect an anthology, an excellent one, with explanations, (Fraser, the good teacher, is careful to supply plenty of background information). It is peppered with critical aperçus and aphorisms, as when he calls Milton "our most learned but not our wisest poet" or, early in the book he says,

"the great Victorians were much influenced by the first impact of poets difficult to decide whether a Victorian poet is saying what he thinks, or what he thinks he ought to think, or remarks that 'Blake is perhaps the ancestor of D. H. Lawrence'."

On language, prosody and metrics, the book is very informative. Fraser is excellent on some of the little-known poets - Hoccleve, for example, the Scottish Chaucerian, Henryson; and Burns's predecessor, Robert Burns. It is good with most of the great figures, especially Dryden, Keats, and Wordsworth. Beyond Wordsworth, his judgement seems a little shaky; he strangely underestimates the importance of Keats, Clare, and Coleridge, and among the moderns seems to have an inexplicable prejudice - for a Scotsman too - against the achievement of Hugh MacDiarmid.

David Wright

Among this week's contributors:

Katharine Dalton is a clinical assistant attached to University College Hospital.
Gillian Peele is Fellow and Tutor in

Politics at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.
David Wright is a poet and the editor of many literary anthologies.

Paperbacks

Understanding grandparents

Dear Dr Stoppel. Edited by Ruth Hall. Penguin £1.75. 0 14 00 5536 3.
Menopause: a positive approach. By Rosetta Reitz. Unwin Paperbacks £2.95. 0 04 61203 9.
The History of Sexuality. By Michel Foucault. Penguin £2.25. 0 14 02 2299 5.

It is a unique pleasure to review a book which running compelling reading from beginning to the very end, but the pleasure was tinged with sorrow at the realization that the book represented the swansong of that distinguished and talented journalist, Ruth Hall, whose obituary was printed in *The Times* on June 15th.

Dear Dr Stoppel is a collection of letters written to the first public figure to draw back the curtains on sexual activity and even expose the pleasure in print. In 1918 *Married Love* and *Wife Parenthood* were first published, and in her time, few individuals were so well known. It is even claimed that George Bernard Shaw was her nearest rival. The letters reflect an era - sometimes so different from today - and yet at other times the problems are perennial. A clergyman wrote of the girls of the saddle top high so that it necessitated an overreach of the leg with downstroke of the pedal,

which rubbed the peak of the saddle where it should not be. These girls were always inclined to be fast. Defending his views on contraception, a Catholic father wrote "to take the example of the worn-out mother of 12, my belief is that the loss of health for a few years, diminished strength in the later years would be a small price to pay for endless ages." Others represent the run-of-the-mill type that our problem adults of today answer regularly in their columns, advice to those "who eat the forbidden fruit", questioning the possibility of pregnancy without actual entry and when does the urge disappear. As a piece of social history, or trying to understand the minds of our parents and grandparents, it is unchallengeable. My only regret is that there will now be no follow-on.

Menopause - a positive approach was originally published in the States in 1977, but the changes which have occurred in women's outlook and medical advances in the last five years are not reflected in the book. It describes a laywoman's search for what the menopause could and should be like, together with some positive advice on how to cope with these years by sensible thinking, walking, loving and eating. This positive approach is especially for those women who have yet to experience this physiological stage of natural

growth. Hormone replacement therapy is regarded as the best friend of the oestrogen manufacturers and she ponders whether male hormones also help, and one applauds her efforts to remove menopause from a disease category. In parts, unfortunately, it is too unsentimental. She mistakenly regards premenstrual symptoms 12 years before the last menstruation as premenopausal, and has a simplistic view on the hormone changes, mentioning the increase in the two female pituitary hormones, follicle stimulating hormone and luteinizing hormone. This occurs during the menopause in nature's effort to stimulate the ovaries to produce oestrogen which probably lies at the root of the many symptoms described.

We have constantly been told that the Victorians imposed a repression on sexuality and any discussion of it was shunned. They themselves are often portrayed as hypocritical prudes. Michel Foucault, in his book *The History of Sexuality* Volume 1, (translated from the French by Robert Hurley) sets out to find if this is indeed true and his labyrinthine researches into historical, religious, political and psychological factors which he shares with us, leads us through a veritable jungle of social mechanisms to a fascinating conclusion.

Katharina Dalton

resources

Boat trips to history

Claire Hardisty surveys floating maritime museums and ship collections

For some people, boats and the sea have the same pulling power as railways. About 92 museums have maritime exhibits, usually small craft relating to local industries, models and artefacts. But you can't beat the real thing, and there is a growing number of floating museums.

One of these is the Windermere Steamboat Museum in Cumbria. It is run by the Windermere Maritime Trust and the majority of the exhibits here are for looking at rather than walking on. The oldest boat is a 26 foot sailing yacht from 1780; the most modern is a 1962 hydroplane. There are about twenty other boats, including Beatrix Potter's rowing boat and the oldest mechanically powered boat in the world, the *Dolly* of 1850. Most of the exhibits are in the water and in working condition. The public are allowed direct access to two steamboats, *S. S. Raven*, a 72 foot cargo boat, and a twin screw steam yacht *Experience* - Captain Flint's houseboat in *Swallows and Amazons*. A 1902 diesel powered pleasure boat is available for rides.

School groups are given an introductory talk about the collection and a large illustrated leaflet giving details of all the boats. A new lecture theatre will be completed in 1982, and services for schools will be extended. The party admission rates are 45p for children and 65p for adults, and the Museum is open

from Easter to October. Another new development is the Mersey Maritime Museum which opened last year. It is primarily concerned with Dockland, and is open from March to November. They have just held an experimental Maritime Month for schools, showing working steam vehicles and a turning capstan, with sea shanty and seam caulking sessions. A work booklet has been prepared for school visitors, and quiz sheets are also available. For schools the entry charge is 10p for children and 15p for adults.

Situated on the River Exe and Exeter Canal Basin with a linking ferry, the Exeter Maritime Museum of Boats was established twelve years ago. It was set up by the International Sailing Craft Association and claims to be the largest and most varied collection of sail and oar powered working boats in the world. There are more than a hundred boats from all over the world moored at the quayside, on the river banks and in the Warehouse Museum, and they range in sophistication from a telf to the *Britannia*, in which John Fairfax rowed solo across the Atlantic. The collection includes Brunel's steam powered mud clearing drag-boat the *Bertha* of 1844.

The boats are listed in an illustrated *Boat Guide* which includes a miniature sketch with information

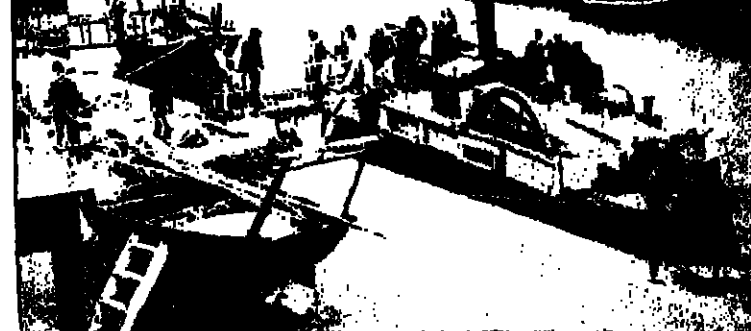
about each boat. Any boats moored in the Canal Basin can be boarded, and rowing boats are available for hire. There is plenty of picnic space including some on board for wet weather. There is a teachers' advice leaflet and a giant questionnaire of 74 graded questions with answers, parts of which can become a basis for worksheets. The cost is 60p for each child with teachers given free admittance both for the visit and for preparatory visits. There are no "Don't Touch" notices.

No-one should visit the *Cutty Sark* at Greenwich before reading the "Teachers Guide to the Cutty Sark". Produced by the ILEA Gordon Teachers' Centre in association with the Cutty Sark Society, the prime voice throughout is that of an authentic sailor, Captain Godfrey Wickstead. He sailed in the *Mayflower* replica and is currently Rigging Advisor to the Society. The booklet explains simply the working parts, nautical terms, and work on board. A poster-sized information sheet is available for 10p. The entrance fee for pupils is 15p, for adults, 35p, and the teachers' guide costs £1. The Museum is open all the year round except Mondays, and booking is essential.

The *Belfast*, which was launched in 1938, is moored on the Thames by Tower Bridge and has been run as a department of the Imperial War Museum since 1978. One perk of a visit is the magnificent views of London from an unusual vantage point. Worksheets are almost a hindrance here. It is not easy to cope quickly and safely with steep companionways and cat walks clutching a work board and pencil and perhaps a case or carrier bag.

When *HMS Belfast* was first opened to the public by the Navy in 1971, it was heavily released from commission. An odour of cooking, not washing soda and oil created an instant sea of what it was like to live at sea with 800 men for long periods. Now, with models in diving gear, working in communications and in the tiny Sick Bay behind display panels, the feelings roused by *Belfast* are complex.

The fatigue of loading a heavy 6' gun eight times a minute for twenty minutes at a time in a tiny enclosed



Brunel's Steam Dredger "Bertha", now part of the Exeter Maritime Museum

space cannot be imagined even with the simulated loading and firing and commentary tape in "A" turret. Nor can life below be imagined, in a surreal world of winding white pipes, shining brass, and high cat walks in the engine and boiler room.

In the teaching room there are photographs and display uniforms as well as ammunition to lift - if you can - and a hammock to assemble and try out. Archive material on tape includes sailors describing battle at first hand. Talks with slides are offered during school terms on "Life at Sea" or "History of Belfast". Admission for school parties costs 60p for children and £1.20 for adults. A teachers' leaflet is available. If you are lucky, you may have a glimpse of Naval activity. Several times a year minesweepers, flagships and sometimes submarines moor alongside while they pay a courtesy call to the Port of London.

In 1969 the Maritime Trust established a Historic Ship Collection in the basin of St. Katherine's Dock. There are seven ships: Captain R. F. Scott's 1901 National Antarctic Expedition's Headquarters, the *Discovery*; a Thames spitsail barge, *Cambria*; a cargo topsail schooner, *Kathleen and May*; a steam coaster, the *Robin*; a coal-fired steam herring clipper, *Lydia Evi*; the steam tug *Challenge*; and the *Nore Light* vessel. All these can be walked around for one entry charge of 40p for each child at the school party rate, £1 for each adult.

All the ships are open below deck so that machinery and living quarters can be viewed. Staff meet school parties and take them to *Discovery*

where a short history talk is given. On the other ships a skipper or watch keeper will answer questions. Picnics can be eaten aboard *Robin*. A teachers' pack is in preparation which will be a compilation of information, with work programme suggestions and work sheets. It should be available at the end of the year.

HMS Victory is a Naval enterprise, and is situated in dry dock at Spithead and is situated in dry dock at Portsmouth. As part of the Portsmouth Royal Naval Museum the collection consists of exhibitions relating to Naval history from Nelson to the present day, as well as items relating to Nelson himself. It includes one of the two death masks of Nelson, and W. M. Wyllie's painting of "The Battle of Trafalgar".

Beautifully preserved, the *Victory* impresses the visitor with the style of warfare in the early part of the nineteenth century compared with that of machine age warfare on *Belfast*. Life for the men before a remarkable similarity though, in the cramped conditions of a mess table and with stools slung between two rigging, stores, cabins and dispensary equipped with contemporary surgical instruments.

There is a "Service to School" booklet with historical background, biography of Nelson and a description of exhibits on board. It contains useful black and white drawings for reproduction work and costs 50p. Specimen worksheets are available for duplicating. Entrance to the Museum costs 10p with free admission to *Victory*.



Sculpture project at Bretton Hall College, Wakefield

inspired as these "explorers" de la chair et de l'esprit" (as they are dubbed by Ms. Benhalla) were searching for something they never found, they were indeed "poets maudits". But their liaison gave rise to an abundance of poetry, which in Verlaaine's case created a new mood of literary melancholy and nostalgia and in Rimbaud's contained the first hints of surrealism. To say, as the author does, that the pair were the first Symbolists, is to overlook Baudelaire's contribution to nineteenth-century poetry; it is, moreover, problematical to make such a categorical statement about what is actually very varied material.

Verlaaine was certainly seeking a new form of poetry, and also a new musical one. He found this in "symbolic" lines with an uneven number of syllables - not necessarily, as Baudelaire claims, wholly in Symbolism. He also feels that the names Verlaaine and Rimbaud are inseparable, which is more than a little extravagant.

Verlaaine said at the end of his life in reference to his marriage: "If I had been able to control my sexuality, this happiness would have made me a different man." He indulged in several homosexual relationships during his life, though it was the first, with the lonely rebel Arthur Rimbaud, which alienated his wife irretrievably.

The selection of poems read by the two narrators is as comprehensive as it can be within the limits of a cassette. Narrated in French, the tape intersperses biographical anecdotes with poems set to musical accompaniment. Distinct and sensitive readings are enhanced by melancholy strains on stringed instruments. Against the briefly etched backdrop of contemporary France, the fall of the Second Empire, the drinking of absinthe in pavement cafes, the cultural and literary life of the salons - the bizarre and sordid progress of the relationship is skilfully unfolded, with the helpful inclusion of dates. This story could not be told without mentioning the frequent incidents of violence: stabbings, rows, and the shooting of Rimbaud by his friend.

The narrators do, however, emphasize the elements of romance and excitement, such as the poems Rimbaud sent him before "your attend". It is certain too that Rimbaud represented such emotions as intoxication and youth for Verlaaine - and also degradation, as the author claims. Something of the emotion in the poems is conveyed in these readings. The combination of literature and biography makes this cassette a lively supplement to a study of the poets.

resources

Primary Trak record

by Virginia Makins

Big Trak Computerized toy, Milton Bradley Electronics. From about £30.

Big Trak is a noisy space invader in a school, but one which several primary teachers are finding interesting, both for enlivening maths work and for introducing some basic ideas about programming computers.

It is a computer controlled tank-like machine, about a foot long, which can be programmed to move forwards or backwards, turn left or right, pause and fire. Each command requires a number - forward so many lengths, fire so many times, pause so many tenths of a second. The memory accepts programs of up to 16 steps. There is a noisy fanfare at the beginning and end of every program.

Making it carry out planned manoeuvres is challenging for children, and calls for careful thinking about distances, angles and position. Big Trak seems to encourage 10 and 11-year olds to get out a pencil and paper to work out their plans, and younger children to walk out their intended route for Big Trak. Children have to break down their plans into separate steps, and find the right number for every command.

That said, Big Trak is far from perfect. The turns work on a clock face system, rather than in degrees - so for 180 degrees you program Big Trak to turn 30, for 90 degrees turn 15, and so on. Or, turn about 15. Big Trak's turns are fairly erratic, as well as varying on different surfaces. So Big Trak is no good for precision work on shapes, but it does require systematic thinking, and its erratic habits require intelligent handling and approximation.



It is easy to double up an input by accident - programming 55 rather than 5. This, coupled with the fact that my Big Trak seems to get rather tired and emotional after an hour or so's steady use, sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish machine error from human error, which can be frustrating for children.

Big Trak's programming facilities are basic but excellent. There is a check button, so an individual step in a program can be tried out. A clear entry button allows children to correct a mistake without starting a program again from scratch. A repeat button means any number of steps (within the overall limit of 16) can be repeated once at any stage in a program, encouraging economic programming.

Most junior schools would probably find that two or three children now have Big Trak at home (in one small socially mixed primary, at least four juniors - all boys - said they had one). Since Big Trak is more fun in the wide open spaces of school halls than in many homes, children in some schools have been happy to bring them in.

The five, seven and eleven-year olds I tried it on all loved it. The manufacturers recommend it for age seven up, but with supervision a mixed ability bunch of five-year olds seemed competent and surprisingly ambitious about operating it.

Big Trak certainly makes far higher demands on children's intelligence than comparable toys, mainly because it works to the children's own programs and not to a built-in, pre-programmed routine.

Still chasing Rimbauds

by Caroline Mendham

Deux Poètes Maudits
Cassette by Zoufina Benhalla. Narrated by Ms. Benhalla and Hubert Graevenack.

Verlaaine said at the end of his life in reference to his marriage: "If I had been able to control my sexuality, this happiness would have made me a different man." He indulged in several homosexual relationships during his life, though it was the first, with the lonely rebel Arthur Rimbaud, which alienated his wife irretrievably.

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from 1871-75. Rimbaud died in 1891 and Verlaaine in 1896. By the time they met, Verlaaine had already written *Poemes Saturniens*, *Les Amies*, *Fleurs Galantes* and *La Bonne Chanson*. Rimbaud brought to Verlaaine the important *Bateau Ivre* at their first meeting.

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media

Brass qualities

Hilary Finch reviews a BBC music competition

Last night the G. U. S. Brass Band from Northamptonshire scored two more marks than the Scottish Whitburn Brass Band and so won the finals for the second year running of BBC television's *Best of Brass*.

In its fourth year, the contest, founded and produced by Ken Griffin, selects eight bands who are already regional champions in their own right, from the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, and sifts them further in seven televised sessions from the Assembly Rooms, Derby, providing a further platform for the bands and entertainment for the locals.

It is all done by attractive sleight-of-hand. Editing and camerawork are deft but never restless, and the presentation, by Gerald Harrison and guest regional "supporters", is succinct yet congenial. The adjudication, by Lt Col Trevor Sharpe (ex-director, Kneller Hall), is brief and conversational. It takes a well-proportioned half-hour's entertainment.

But when big prize money is involved (the winner gets £1000) and

the television audience is roped in to vote by post for the winning soloist, then the programmes certainly deserve weighting with rather more, and better-chosen, words. Trevor Sharpe's judgements, though of necessity in layman's language, were disappointingly brief and imprecise.

He spoke of texture, contrasts, tone, articulation but too quickly and generally to give us any real sense of the qualities he was looking for. To the ear of all but the cognoscenti, one brass band (especially of this calibre) can sound much like another, and the television audience needs some guidelines for judging the solo performances.

With several young performers, often of quite exceptional professionalism and musicianship, this is, after all, a particularly important part of the series. There was, for instance, Martin Wilson, now principal trombone of the Whitburn Brass Band, a member of the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland and studying at Napier College who played Gordon Langford's test-

ing and athletic *Rhapsody for Trombone* and Andrew Duncan, of the Whitburn Junior Band, also at Napier and a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland with his *Tuba Tapestry*.

Brass band experience is providing an increasingly important and stable core in the training of young musicians, whether for amateur or professional musical life: the "thrills, spills and thrills" as Gerald Harrison had it, the aura of the Sunday afternoon bandstand captured delightfully in the contest's white cut-out set, are a part of what brass bands are about. That the wide audiences of this readily and deceptively accessible form of music-making should in turn be educated to evaluate and particularize their responses should be one of the prime responsibilities of a series like *Best of Brass*.

Movie buffs

by Maire Messenger

Last week's *Clapperboard* (Granada) offered an interesting survey of animated puppetry in films which was a good example of ITV's often ambiguous approach to children's programming. *Clapperboard*, which has been surveying the movie scene for ten years, has "never consciously been aimed at children", according to its producer Graeme Murray. Yet it has always been screened at a "children's time" - 4.15 pm or, currently, at noon on Saturday.

Last Saturday's featured films delightfully were aimed at a young audience: *The Great Muppet Caper*, *Clash of the Titans*, and *Thunderbirds are Go* (made in 1968, and a rare example of marionette puppetry). Children must have enjoyed the clips enormously, especially Miss Piggy doing an underwater ballet, but they must have been baffled by presenter Chris Kelly's reference to "an ingenious send-up of the Esther Williams pictures" and his often rather intellectual script.

Gerry Anderson, creator of *Thunderbirds*, was interviewed at some length. This seemed a bit pointless as the series is no longer around and the string puppet technique seems to have been permanently abandoned.

The programme was a workmanlike survey of the genre. What was lacking was any explanation of why film makers choose to go to such laborious lengths with puppets when people are so much less trouble to move.

Healthy, cheap and good

by Adrian Pearson

On Your Bike
Granada for the ITV network. Programme in the Live from Two series, which is shown Wednesday afternoons in most areas.

Why are we devoting a whole half-hour special to the humble bicycle? asked Shelley Rodde at the beginning of *On Your Bike*. "Because there's a revival in cycling, because it's healthy, cheap and good for the environment", was her answer. To support these claims, several enthusiasts had been invited to speak. There was the editor of a new cycling magazine; a granny who'd cycled across the Rockies; a lady cycling champion; and a friend of the Earth. Unfortunately live programmes have a way of developing on their own, and by the end of *On Your Bike*'s developments even some of the keen cyclist viewers may have been persuaded to hang up their bicycle clips for ever.

From the opening shot of a 16-year old demonstrating a new sport called BMX, the programme and its good intentions were in trouble. BMX requires the use of only one wheel of your bicycle, or there is an alternative mode in which you ride along park benches. Apprehensive parents had their worst fears confirmed as Mike Childer ran through a catalogue of cuts and bruises suffered in the pursuit of this sport, remarking blandly "Well it's better than beating up old grannies isn't it". Most of the expert information, history and prospects of the bicycle was supposed to come from Richard Ballantine, who edits a new magazine called *Bicycle*, but Mr Ballantine's tricks of speaking without moving his lips prevented much of it from reaching us.

By the time that 71-year-old Sid Friend of the Earth and John O'Grady to Lands End cyclist, stopped in front of a microphone to complain of his aching bottom, audience enthusiasm was flying out the window with the bike shed key.

At the end of the programme poor Shelley may have been doubting the wisdom of beginning with the question that she did. Why, indeed, she might wonder, devote a half-hour programme to promoting the bicycle and then saddle yourself with a bunch of bicyclists intent on doing the reverse. In despair she attempted to ride off into the sunset with a geriatric on a tandem. They both very nearly came a cropper.

Sculpture by a scenic route

Sally Festing describes the atmosphere at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

At Bretton Hall, there are people, and beautiful scenery, and now modern sculpture has been introduced to see how much interaction the three can generate. The Yorkshire Sculpture Park opened in the grounds of Bretton Hall College of Higher Education in 1977. Four years later it is becoming established as a magnet for national and international sculptors and a place where the public can see contemporary sculpture.

Britain has an exceptional number of gifted sculptors, and it was the post-war Battersea exhibition, that prompted the development of sculpture parks elsewhere, though there was no permanent one in this country. The situation was finally remedied by staff from the College backed by the Arts Council, the Yorkshire Arts Association, and Wakefield MDC.

Naturally the park is in touch with its sister organizations. Comparing the two sculpture parks in New York State gives some idea of the range of possibilities: on the one hand there is Art Park which is bulldozed at the end of each summer, and on the other Storm King, Mountainville, which has a unique collection of first class sculpture.

The famous Kröller Müller in Holland concentrates on a historical sequence, in Romania and Yugoslavia

via there are sculpture camps, whilst at the Hakone in Japan, the sculpture is very much the choice of its millionaire founder. Others have mushroomed in Belgium, Jerusalem, even Saudi Arabia, and nearer home, two in Scotland were set up three years ago by the Scottish Sculpture Trust.

At Landmark, Cambridge, the pieces are displayed like a nature trail in an ancient fir forest. At Glenesh, they rise up from a desolate hillside, and at Grizedale Forest in South Glimbri, the Forestry Commission provides the raw materials and a working environment for artists' 6-month residencies.

Tatton Hall, Cheshire, run weekly colour and temporary exhibitions for schools, but nowhere draws on education in quite the same way as does Bretton Hall. The staff do not believe it is sufficient to place modern sculpture in the open and simply leave it at that.

A programme of changing exhibitions, lectures and seminars, running side by side with an active educational programme, takes pupils at age levels from primary school parties to post-graduate study. Most of the work is done through talks followed by visits, although the YSP education officer sometimes goes into schools to prepare pupils for a

visit and he sometimes also visits afterwards.

School children come to look and almost inevitably they want to draw. Because they move more easily in and out of an imaginative world, their reactions are often more immediate than those of adults. Groups can go from looking at the works to their own sculpture projects within the grounds, experimenting on a scale which is difficult to match within the confines of a school.

The park is also dedicated to the interests of the sculptor: it provides opportunities to know work on a large scale and to relate pieces with natural objects. A slide library of modern sculptors' work is being assembled. In a varied programme, XSP provides space for British and foreign artists while retaining the strong Yorkshire connection with contemporary sculpture. Both Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth were born in the area.

Following an exhibition by the French Canadian Louis Archambault who uses prefabricated, factory constructed parts in his work, there will shortly be a major exhibition of delicate, bronze and aluminium pieces based on plant and human form by the Yorkshire sculptor, A. W. Wright. This is a retrospective celebrating his seventieth birthday. September brings another new ex-

hibition, "Attitudes", with work by Walter Dusenberry (USA) Jorgen Haugen Sorenson (Denmark) Lee Grandjean and Glynn Williams (Britain). Next year there will be a large show from California, their major exhibition of George Rickey's kinetic sculpture.

Two artists in residence have taken up fellowships. They sometimes feel they have a great deal to teach directly, and sometimes they just answer questions. Their time in the park is followed by an exhibition and a catalogue. A programme of formal lectures given by exhibitors, visiting artists, staff and art critics attract members of the college as well as

large number of the public. There are also visits from regional and national organizations such as the Federation of Business and Professional Women, Friends of Art Galleries, the Contemporary Arts Society, Teachers' Associations and University Societies.

Since the Park is part of the College, there is a variety of interesting activities. Drama, music and visual arts are influenced by powerful structures. At present, the Professional Studies department are taping discussions made about sculpture in a language study with BED teachers use it to find ways of teaching across the curriculum.

